



DRAMA

AUTUMN

1953

STELLA MARY PEARCE: *Clothes and the Scholar.* J. W. LAMBERT: *Plays in Performance.* CLIFFORD BAX: *Terence Rattigan.* MICHAEL LANGHAM: *Australian Theatre To-day.* MICHAEL MACOWAN, NORMAN MARSHALL, ROBERT SPEAIGHT: *The Theatre under the two Elizabeths.*

PRICE 1/6

SEP 14
LIBRARY

THE BRITISH DRAMA LEAGUE

A Festival of Original Full-Length Plays

Following a Resolution passed by the 1953 Conference the League desires to hold in 1953-54 a Festival to encourage societies to produce new plays and give the work of new authors a wider currency.

Conditions of Entry

THE PLAY to be in the English language; of not less than 1½ hours' playing time and never previously performed on stage, radio, or television.

THE PERFORMANCE to be arranged on the company's own stage and visited by an adjudicator appointed by the League.

THE COST to be a nominal entry fee, plus adjudicator's fee and expenses. (A pooling system might be arranged if the response were sufficient.)

Peter Ustinov Award

Mr. Peter Ustinov, President of the League of Dramatists, has presented an Award of £25 to be made to the company giving the best production of a new play, and this production will be shown at the League's Theatre Week in Malvern, September, 1954.

This preliminary enquiry is designed to ascertain interest in the projected Festival. Would you therefore let the Director know by September 30th, 1953, whether your Society would wish to enter it.

The B.D.L. Postal Course in Playwriting

consisting of twelve Lessons, which cover every aspect of play construction and dramatic authorship, is designed to cater for the individual requirements of every student. The full course costs only £7 7s. to League members. A shortened course can be taken for £4 4s.

Second Supplement to "The Player's Library"

will be published shortly. See page 51.

9 FITZROY SQUARE, LONDON, W.1

UE

ires
and

s'
or

e

d
e

as
e
n

Festive
er yo

ng
struction
remen
ember

ary

W.

T

th
he
ev
w
of
th

R

E
C
J
N
N
D

E
V
-
V

HEINEMANN

To be published in September

MICHAEL REDGRAVE

The Actor's Ways and Means

The remarkable range of this great actor on the stage and in films is known throughout the world, and now this book gives us the first opportunity of studying how he approaches his parts, together with his views on his craft and the theatre.

It is not a text-book on Acting but so valuable are this actor's comments that every young actor and producer will turn to it eagerly, and every lover of the theatre will want to possess it.

The book is lavishly illustrated with photographs of Michael Redgrave in many of his varied roles. The text is that of the Rockefeller Foundation Lectures which the author delivered at Bristol University last year.

10s. 6d.

THE DRAMA LIBRARY

Recent additions to the Series

CYRANO DE BERGERAC		
Edmond Rostand	Translation by Brian Hooker	7s. 6d.
OUT OF THE WHIRLWIND		
Christopher Hassall	A fine play for Church production	6s. 0d.
EMMANUEL		
James Forsyth	A Nativity Play	3s. 6d.
CAVALCADE		
Noel Coward	With an Introduction by the author	4s. 6d.
THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR		
Nikolai Gogol	Introduction by Janko Lavrin	4s. 6d.
A MONTH IN THE COUNTRY		
Ivan Turgenev	Introduction by Michael Redgrave	4s. 6d.
THREE MEDIEVAL PLAYS		
<i>Edited by John Allen</i>		
Everyman	: Coventry Nativity Play : Master Pierre Pathelin	4s. 6d.
HIS EMINENCE OF ENGLAND		
Hugh Ross Williamson	The Canterbury Festival Play, 1953	4s. 6d.
LIKE STARS APPEARING		
Viscount Duncannon	Introduction by E. Martin Browne	5s. 0d.

A List of Plays and Theatre Books is available from the Publishers

WILLIAM HEINEMANN LTD., 99 GT. RUSSELL ST., W.C.1

EVANS PLAYS

West End successes now available:—

THE HOLLY AND THE IVY

by Wynyard Browne

One set, 4 m., 4 f. 5/-

TO DOROTHY A SON

by Roger MacDougall

One set, 3 or 5 m., 3 f. 5/-

WHO IS SYLVIA?

by Terence Rattigan

One set, 6 m., 7 f. (or 4 m., 3 f.). 5/-

THE SAME SKY

by Yvonne Mitchell

One set, 4 m., 3 f., 2 juv. (boys). 5/-

The following full length plays are also available:—

A CRADLE OF WILLOW

Dorothy Wright

New Nativity Play, recently televised. One set, 7 m., 3 f. 4/6.

"A rare and lovely thing . . . a sweet, strong play."—*The Observer*.

CORINTH HOUSE

Pamela Hansford Johnson

A brilliantly written play, full of good acting parts, both dramatic and humorous, which scored immediate successes on the radio and television. Two simple sets, 1 m., 6 f. 4/6.

FIT FOR HEROES

Harold Brooke and Kay Bannerman

Delightful farcical comedy, first produced at the Embassy Theatre with Dame Irene Vanbrugh as Lady Wimpole. One set, 4 m., 3 f. 4/-.

MACADAM AND EVE

Roger MacDougall

"Fantastic fun. . . . It is salted with wit, peppered with audacity, and it has enough real speculation behind its fun to make us now and then thoughtful in our laughter. A highly unusual fantastic comedy."—Alan Dent in the *News Chronicle*. One set, 3 m., 3 f. 5/-.

THE MARTINS' NEST

Joan Morgan

A warm, lively, amusing, touching play of a family. A comedy in three acts, first produced at the Westminster Theatre with Hermione Baddeley as Mrs. Martin. One set, 5 m., 2 f., 1 juv. (boy). 5/-.

SWEETHEARTS AND WIVES

G. & M. Hackforth-Jones

Lively naval comedy, where scandals, embarrassments and countermeasures combine for delightful entertainment without the need for elaborate production. One set, 6 m., 5 f. 5/-.

DARK SUMMER

Wynyard Browne

A delightfully moving and sincere play, by the author of *The Holly and the Ivy*, requiring only one set, 1 m., 4 f. 4/6.

CRANFORD

arr. Martyn Coleman

This dramatisation, so well received both on the stage and on television, faithfully preserves the charm of the novel, sympathetically bringing to life the leisured (but impecunious) ladies of Cranford. Simple set and costume. 2 m., 9 f. 5/-.

NORTHANGER ABBEY

arr. Thea Holme

From Jane Austen's novel, with alternative suggestions for simple or elaborate production. A play in three acts, with prologue and epilogue. Three sets, 7 m., 6 f. and supers. 6/-.

Postage on single copies of any of the above, Ad. extra.

EVANS BROTHERS LIMITED

MONTAGUE HOUSE RUSSELL SQUARE LONDON W.C.1

Telegrams: BYRONITIC WESTCENT, LONDON Telephone: MUSEUM 8521

SCENIC COLOURS AND SUNDRIES

Special Announcement

Our best Fireproofed Scenic Canvas and Hessian have recently been considerably reduced in price; also all Aniline Dyes and many of our Scenic Colours.

We also have a new system of quantity discounts and in many cases goods are now sent Post or Rail free.

Please write for our latest Price List which includes all particulars of above.

We have over 100 years' experience in supplying Amateur Societies and Professional Repertory Companies with all the materials required for scenic painting &c., and you may confidently send your problems to us. We shall do our best to assist you.

Brodie & Middleton Ltd.

(Dept. D.)

79 LONG ACRE, LONDON, W.C.2

Established 1840

Phone: Temple Bar 3289, 3280

CAPE OF CHISWICK

for
SCENERY
and
DRAPERY

SUTTON LANE
CHISWICK, W.4

CHISwick 2828

BECKWIN

THEATRE FURNISHINGS

You will be wise to make use of our long experience when you are requiring

**DRAPERIES
STAGE EQUIPMENT
SEATING AND CARPETS**
for Theatres and Halls.

Here are a few of the contracts entrusted to us:

Birmingham Repertory Theatre
Birmingham Hall Green Little Theatre
Chesterfield Civic Theatre
Colchester Repertory Theatre
Glasgow Citizens Theatre
Leicester Little Theatre
London Arts Theatre
Sutton Coldfield Highbury Theatre
Scottish Community Drama Association

Write or 'phone to:

BECK & WINDIBANK LTD.
Clement Street, Birmingham, 1
Telephone: CENtral 3834
Telegrams: CARPETS BIRMINGHAM

FABRICS & FITTINGS

STAGE DRAPERIES

FURNISHING AND
COSTUME
MATERIALS
OF ALL
TYPES

HALL & DIXON LTD.
19 GARRICK STREET, LONDON, W.C.2

**STAGE
PLANNING
AND
EQUIPMENT**

SCENE CLOTHS ready
for painting

PHONE: TEMple Bar 1930 - 8331

Mayfair WITH *Vic*
Displays

CONTRACTORS to the PROFESSION



ARE NOW ABLE TO OFFER A
UNIQUE SCENERY
HIRE SERVICE
TO AMATEUR THEATRICAL SOCIETIES



- ★ SCALE MODEL DESIGN TO
YOUR SPECIFICATIONS
- ★ PRECISION CONSTRUCTION
- ★ EVERY SET
NEWLY PAINTED

PHONE MAC-5818

STAGE AND SCREEN PROPERTIES

JEWELLERY - PERIOD & MODERN
FLORAL DECOR, SILVERWARE
GENERAL STAGE PROPERTIES

Sets Designed & Posters to Order

We have served the Professional
Stage for over half a century
HIRING IS OUR SPECIALITY

Our specialised advice is at
your service.

ROBINSON BROS. LTD
57 HAMPSTEAD ROAD, LONDON, W.1
(Tottenham Court Road end)
EUSton 4894

Recommended by the British Drama League

EST. 1790

L. & H. **NATHAN**

for
BEST
COSTUMES

NATHANWIGS

for
BEST WIGS
and
MAKE-UP

12 PANTON STREET
HAYMARKET
LONDON

WHL.: 5245/6 & 1491

**FUR RUGS AND SKINS
STUFFED ANIMALS
BIRDS
HUNTING TROPHIES**

THE FILM INDUSTRY AND PROFESSIONAL STAGE
HAVE HIRED OUR PRODUCTS FOR MANY YEARS.
WE SHOULD LIKE TO OFFER YOU OUR SERVICES
AND INVITE YOUR ENQUIRIES FOR THESE HIGHLY
SPECIALISED PROPERTIES

EUSton 2765

EST. 1850

**EDW. GERRARD
AND SONS**

61 COLLEGE PLACE, LONDON, N.W.1

BUY—don't hire

STAGE SCENERY. We supply Box Sets, Backcloths, in Hessian, Canvas or thick paper **ANY SIZE REQUIRED**, and **BUY** what you no longer need.

NEW BOX SETS, 14 pieces ... £50

NEW BACKCLOTHS at 8d. per sq. ft. Any scene painted to order.

Write for quotation to

JOHN WILLIAMS, Scenery Makers
1 MEADOW STUDIOS, BUSHEY, Herts
Tel.: BUShey Heath 2914

GARRICK CURTAINS LTD

Curtain Specialists

44 AMHURST ROAD · HACKNEY · LONDON · E·8

Telephone AMHerst 3171

B. J. SIMMONS & CO.
(1941) LTD.

The Premier Professional Costumiers

Productions Dressed for the West End during the Past Year include

"QUADRILLE"

"A WOMAN OF NO IMPORTANCE"

"VENICE PRESERVED"

"WAY OF THE WORLD"

"BALLO IN MASCHERA" & "GLORIANA"

(the magnificent Ballroom Costumes)

and in preparation:

"THE KING & I" (Complete production for Drury Lane)

**HUGE STOCKS OF PERIOD COSTUMES AVAILABLE FOR
REPERTORY COMPANIES AND AMATEUR DRAMATIC SOCIETIES**

Postal Enquiries to:—

7 & 8 KING STREET, COVENT GARDEN

Personal Calls to:—

25 SHELTON STREET, COVENT GARDEN

Telephone: TEMple Bar 5568

The A.B.C. of Theatrical Make-up

by PHYL HARRIS
Edited by BINNIE HALE

A useful handbook of simple instructions and
explanatory diagrams.

Price 3/9d. (including Postage)

From:

96a Charing Cross Road, W.C.2
Temple Bar 7558

FAITH HOUSE WARDROBE LTD

PERIOD &

COSTUMES

BIBLICAL

7 Tufton St., S.W.1 ABBey 6218

SALLY SPRUCE

Theatrical Costumier

LADIES' DRESSES SUPPLIED FOR MUSICAL AND DRAMATIC PRODUCTIONS

A large range of new Gowns, Suits, and Coats
available for the coming season

GERrard 3162

49 GREEK STREET, W.1

BEST FOR WIGS

"BERT"

BEST FOR MAKE-UP

30 years Wigmaker to the Old Vic — Sadler's Wells Organisation
Any Production Undertaken — Opera, Shakespeare, Drama, Ballet, Pageants, etc.

REMEMBER

The Family Wigmaking business built up entirely on satisfactory work, and Recommendation

NON-COMBINE

PERSONAL ATTENTION WHENEVER POSSIBLE FOR MAKING UP PRODUCTIONS

No Sponge make-up work done, on grounds of Hygiene

Wigs for Hire. All make-up materials for sale

Please Note Address:

"BERT" 46 Portnall Road, London, W.9
(Ladbroke 1717)

DINELY REHEARSAL STUDIOS

FOR HIRE BY THE HOUR

Open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Saturdays inclusive, for lessons, Rehearsals, Examinations, etc.

OFFICE—

1 Devonshire Terrace, Marylebone High Street, W.1

WELbeck 6804 and 9907

Baker Street and Regents Park Stations, Opposite Royal Academy of Music

The Brandon Thomas Co.

"Charley's Aunt"

by

BRANDON THOMAS

★

For amateur performances apply to:

Messrs. **SAMUEL FRENCH LTD.**
26 Southampton Street, Strand
LONDON, W.C.2

CUSHION HIRE SERVICE.

THE BRITISH CUSHION SUPPLY CO., LTD.

High St., Watford (Watford 4713)

provides

cushions on hire to Societies for any number of performances. Large or small quantities supplied. Quotations by return.

CITIZEN HOUSE, LTD.

21 GREEN PARK, BATH

Are you considering presenting a Period Play, Musical Comedy, or Pantomime during the coming season?

We can supply you with costumes from our extensive wardrobe, covering all periods, at the most reasonable charges. Wigs and Stage Properties also available.

If you wish us to assist you through our **DRAMA LIBRARY** or **THEATRE WARDROBE**, or if you have any queries appertaining to your production, please write giving full particulars.

A.M.P.R.O.

A Must for Good

Productions

**Professional PRODUCERS
STAGE TECHNICIANS
LECTURERS**

Plays of Merit available for first production. Advice on entract music and all Stage effects.

All enquiries to:

THE SECRETARY, A.M.P.R.O.,
34 Sloane Street, London, S.W.1
Telephone: SLOane 1671

Is your Group as Successful as it might be?

Perhaps it is but you still need—

"THE BUSINESS SIDE of the AMATEUR THEATRE"

By Alan Nelson-Smith

a practical guide to the successful running of an Amateur Dramatic Society. Sponsored by the B.D.L., this is a book you cannot afford to be without—certainly a book you can afford. 186 pages, bound in cloth, 8/10 post free, from

THE INTERNATIONAL BOOKSHOP
52 Charing Cross Road, London, W.C.2

DOREEN ERROLL

COSTUMES of every description

**B. D. L. MEMBERS
SPECIALLY CATERED FOR**

8/9 Carlisle Street, Soho Square, W.1
has removed to bigger premises
Third Floor, SAME HOUSE
Telephone GER. 4136

BUCKIE'S BEARS

The Enchanting Children's Play

By

Erica Fay & Harry Buffkins

Successful in the West End for many years.
Revived 1952-3 at Leatherhead Repertory.
Available for West-End production and Repertory
Theatres.
Acting Edition available, privately printed.

Apply for rights to:

ERICA FAY, c/o Messrs. Braby & Waller,
Dacre House, Arundel Street, London, W.C.2

TWENTIETH CENTURY THEATRE

291 WESTBOURNE GROVE, W.11

Station: Notting Hill Gate. Bus Routes 15 and
52 pass the Theatre. 27, 28, 31, 46 cross
Westbourne Grove near the Theatre

THEATRE AVAILABLE for

Dramatic Performances

Rehearsals, Concerts

Orchestra Practices

Lantern Lectures, Meetings

etc., etc.

Acoustic qualities excellent

*Can be hired by the hour, day, week, or
longer* *Moderate Terms*

For further particulars,
apply Theatre Secretary—
PARK 6870

WINNING ONE-ACT PLAYS

By BERTHA SELOUS PHILIPS

"GOOD THEATRE" (Drama, 3 m., 2 w.).

"THE MAGNATE" (Grand Guignol. 3 m., 1 w.).
(Typescripts 2/-. On appro. 3d. per week
plus postage)

"STITCHES IN TIME" (Drama. 6 w. Clemence
Dane Trophy 1952).

"THE STILL WATERS" (Drama, 8 w. Semi-
finals B.D.L. Festival, Scala Theatre, 1953).
(Printed copies 2/-. On appro. 3d. per week
plus postage)

Acting Fee for above Plays:

Drama Clubs, Societies £1 0 0 E.P.
W.L.'s and T.W.G.'s 10 0 E.P.

Apply MRS. BERTHA SELOUS PHILIPS
The Chalet, Boars Hill, Oxford (Tel.: 75334)

THE BRITISH DRAMA LEAGUE

combined **INSURANCE** Policy
for
AMATEUR SOCIETIES
issued through

REX. THOMAS (INSURANCE) LTD.

Incorporated Insurance Brokers

Head Office:

COPTHALL HOUSE,
COPTHALL AVENUE,
LONDON, E.C.2.

Telephone: MONarch 7474/5

SCALE OF PREMIUMS

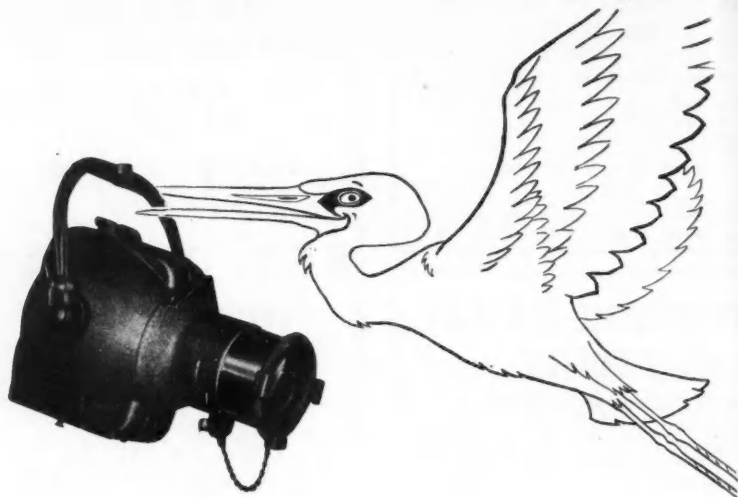
Value of Property to be insured not exceeding	Ten Days Cover	Eighteen Days Cover
£100	25/-	32/6
£250	30/-	37/6
£500	35/-	42/6
£1,000	42/6	52/-
£1,500	50/-	62/6
£2,000	57/6	72/6

RISKS COVERED

1. **LOSS** of or **DAMAGE** to **SCENERY**,
WARDROBE and **PROPERTIES**
whether belonging to the Society or on
HIRE or **LOAN**.
2. **CLAIMS** made by members of the
PUBLIC for personal injury or damage
to property up to **£5000** plus law costs.
3. **EMPLOYERS' LEGAL LIABILITY**.

For Detailed Prospectus apply to:—

REX THOMAS (Insurance) LTD.



THE NEW BABY SPOT

The coming of the baby mirror spot is a blessed event for every Amateur Dramatic Society. This new Strand lantern is designed expressly for small stage productions.

Its highly efficient optical system provides a greater intensity of light for a given wattage and the beam can be masked to any desired shape.

As a front-of-house spot it offers tremendous advantages over standard stage equipment, and being of small dimensions a number of these lanterns can be accommodated on the smallest stage, thus giving a far more flexible lighting installation.

The same lantern is easily and quickly adaptable for wide or narrow angle beams and can be focussed to a spot of any size which is free of ghost or stray light.

These lanterns can be purchased outright at the following prices or hired from any Strand branch for 17/6 per week, including lamps.

Purchase Price Pattern 23 ..	£9 9 0
Ditto with wide angle lens combination	£10 10 0
Ditto with narrow angle long-throw front	£13 13 0



STRAND ELECTRIC & ENGINEERING CO. LTD.

29 KING STREET, LONDON, W.C.2

Branches at

313 Oldham Road, Manchester, and 62 Dawson Street, Dublin

Scottish Agents

Stage Furnishings Ltd., 346 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow

DRAMA

The Quarterly Theatre Review

NEW SERIES

AUTUMN 1953

NUMBER 30

CONTENTS

Editorial	...	13
Clothes and the Scholar by Stella Mary Pearce	...	14
Plays in Performance by J. W. Lambert	...	18
Terence Rattigan by Clifford Bax	...	22
Australian Theatre To-day by Michael Langham	...	25
The New York Theatre Guild by Rosamond Gilder	...	29
Stratford 1953: Second Instalment by W. Bushill-Matthews	...	31
The Theatre under the two Elizabeths by Michael MacOwan, Norman Marshall and Robert Speaight	...	33
Repertory Enterprise	...	36
Correspondence: John Bourne on Ritual and Drama	...	36
Theatre Bookshelf:		
"Max" and his Fellows by Norman Marshall	...	38
Living Rooms by J. C. Trewin	...	39
From the Great Days by Leo Baker and C. A. C. Davis	...	40
The Open Stage by Hugh Hunt	...	43
Long Plays by Peter Forster	...	43
Mainly for Schools by Lyn Oxenford	...	46
Stage Photography by Roger Gilmour	...	47
The One-Act Play Problem by F. Sladen-Smith	...	48
Members' Pages	...	51

COVER DESIGN BY FELIKS TOPOLSKI

Editor: E. Martin Browne, C.B.E. Assistant Editor: Doris Hutton

Advisory Committee:

Clifford Bax, John Burrell, Lionel Hale, Norman Marshall, C. B. Purdom.

Annual Subscription to any address in the world:

6/6 post free

Editorial, Advertisements and Distribution:

9 Fitzroy Square, London, W.1 (Euston 2666)

A BRITISH DRAMA LEAGUE PUBLICATION



ALBERT RUTHERSTON: This famous designer, who worked on many of Harley Granville-Barker's Shakespearean productions, died recently. The above is his costume design for "Cymbeline" (1922) from the original in the possession of the British Drama League.

Editorial

"Sponsored" Television

THE Government's proposal to allow the operation of TV stations which sell "time" to advertisers has aroused very deep feelings. It is fortunate that, at the very moment when it came up for discussion, the Coronation broadcast provided the best possible demonstration of what we should lose by accepting it; and the American methods of handling that same broadcast showed what we should risk. The safeguards offered in the parliamentary statement of July 2nd were of doubtful value in themselves, but they did serve to show that the Government was alive to the public's concern over the matter.

The theatre is anxious to see the end of a proposal that would intensify the already fierce competition of TV against the live show. The British Drama League, as the handmaid of the theatre, must be in full sympathy with that anxiety. But the matter should not be settled by a battle of conflicting interests: nor, indeed, of conflicting political parties. The best service that the Government could do to the country would be to submit the forthcoming White Paper to a free vote of the House.

National Theatre

The British Drama League Conference in May carried unanimously a resolution urging that the National Theatre be speedily built and that the Treasury should implement the promise of a million pounds given by the House in 1949. The provincial argument against a London building has clearly been abandoned within the League, if not outside it, and the necessity of a theatre to set standards and act as a power-house has been understood. Now that a public attack on the National

Theatre project has developed, it is more than ever necessary for the League thus to reaffirm the support which it has given to the National Theatre ever since its first Conference in 1919. At this moment, too, it is good to see the Founder's son, Robin Whitworth, appointed to the Joint Council of the National Theatre and the Old Vic, where he will be able to continue the lifelong service given by his father.

Professional and Amateur

The Conference also discussed, in an atmosphere of good will, several resolutions dealing with the relationship between these two branches of the theatre. Practical suggestions included the formation of playgoers' clubs, visits for purposes of help and criticism from professionals to amateur shows, and also avoidance by amateur societies of titles which confuse them with professional companies in the public mind. (This was dealt with in our Editorial of Spring, 1953.)

Personalia

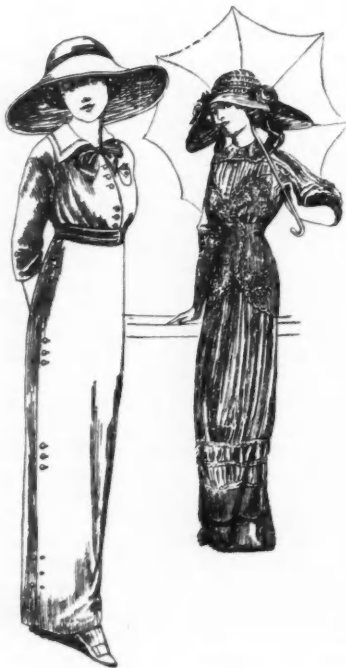
Sir John Gielgud has been honoured by the Queen, as he has always been honoured in the theatre, for his unique quality and integrity as an artist. The Drama League is proud to count him among its Vice-Presidents, and offers its congratulations.

Another Vice-President, Albert Rutherston, died on July 15th. He did much for the League and its Library in the early years, and it still owns a number of his beautiful drawings. Those who saw Granville-Barker's Shakespearean productions will always picture them in Rutherston's designs.

The League in Australia has lost its President, Mr. Justice Nicholas, and the theatre in the Dominion will sorely miss one who selflessly and obstinately strove to promote and support it. His last act was to preside at a luncheon given by the League in honour of the Stratford-on-Avon company. The civic theatre which Sydney so sorely needs would be the best memorial to him.

CLOTHES AND THE SCHOLAR by Stella Mary Pearce

The illustrations reproduced on pages 14 and 15 are by Barbara Phillipson from "English Women's Clothing in the Present Century" by C. Willett Cunnington (Faber and Faber); that on page 16 is taken from "A History of Fashion" by Douglas Gorsline (Batsford).



1910.—Left: Seaside frock (blouse and skirt, the latter in two pieces). Right: Afternoon frock of fancy white voile, with cordings and applications of red linen; Leghorn hat with crown of gauged net.

IN 1755 Winckelmann published in Germany his *History of the Art of the Ancient Greeks*: in 1796 Joseph Strutt published in England his *Dress and Habits of the People of England*. Winckelmann both inspired and was inspired by the eighteenth century's new attitude to the arts of classic antiquity which became known as Neo-classicism: Strutt was an early participator in the English Gothic Revival. Both historians were typical products of the second half of the eighteenth century, men of their time who had come to realise that philosophical discussions on aesthetic values in the arts of the past—and these included architecture and even clothes—soon became empty verbiage unless they were based on an understanding of historical development. Both Winckelmann and Strutt produced works which traced historical development, and both were pioneers in doing so.

Although later historians have found that some of Strutt's information was inaccurate, and many of his terms soon became obsolete (we no longer think of the "Anglo-Normans" as following the Anglo-Saxons, for instance), his two volumes on English dress were important enough to be re-issued in 1840 under the editorship of J. R. Planché, that fascinating character, Somerset Herald, adviser on historical costume to Drury Lane Theatre, and himself author of valuable works on costume, who played an important part in the nineteenth century's changing ideas as to costume in the theatre.

By 1840 new ideas were developing not only on the subject of theatrical costume, but, much more important, on the subject of the writing of art history. A new generation of art historians appeared who no longer, as Winckelmann had done, occupied themselves with forcing a mixture of inherited facts and fictions into the mould of their own personal philosophies, but who, instead, questioned the facts and rejected the fictions: who "decomposed" established authorities

and tunnelled backwards to the source of each inherited statement. The treasure-hoard of romantic anecdotes which had been repeated and reprinted down the ages was gone over and sorted, and the enormous bulk of dress, and with it no doubt a certain amount of the true metal, was discarded. Famous as well as obscure works of painting and sculpture were found to have been attributed to the wrong artist and quite wrongly dated, and while many sentimental traditions had to be abandoned much illuminating new information came to light. To-day a high standard of scholarship is expected of anyone calling himself an art historian, and although, from time to time, as a new vocabulary or a further marshalling of facts requires it, a general history of art is published, research is now directed to special periods, "schools" of painting, and the work of individual painters. A great deal happily remains to be done, for research, apart from its meagre financial side, is one of the most rewarding of occupations; the tradition of the last hundred years ensures that it will be done well.

The study of the history of costume has followed a very different, and during the last fifty years, less felicitous path. The nineteenth century produced its scholars, Viollet-le-Duc and Quicherat in France, Planché and Fairholt, among others, in England, who wrote careful general histories of dress, based on a more thorough knowledge of the past than Joseph Strutt could have drawn on; but these works have not been followed, as has been the case in art history, by a crowd of scholars working on monographs with a view to producing what would eventually amount to an accurate and detailed survey of the clothes of the past. One or two such studies have indeed found their way into print, but to enumerate them would not use up the fingers on one hand; and since these special studies are quite unrelated as to period and country, excellent as they are, they have no cumulative effect.

Of these careful scholarly works the most valuable are Adrien Harmand's *Jeanne d'Arc, ses Costumes, son Armure*, published in Paris in 1929; Fritz Hof van Thienen's *The Great Age of Holland*, published as one of the monographs in the series *Costume in the Western World* in 1951; Leandro Ozzola's *Il Vestiaro Italiano*, Rome, 1948; and C. Willett Cunnington's *English Women's Clothing in the Nineteenth Century*, London, 1937.



1928: Wool coat-frock, bodice finished with georgette roll collar.

Harmand, after carefully collecting all contemporary references to the clothes worn by Joan of Arc explores in minute detail dress in France between 1400 and 1430 with a view to discovering exactly what St. Joan looked like: Professor van Thienen, who is, incidentally professor of Fine Art in Amsterdam, *not* of costume, explains, with the help of splendid reproductions of dated paintings, the dress of a particular social class in Holland during the seventeenth century. *Il Vestiaro Italiano* is a survey of the dress of North Italy

between 1500 and 1550 which has a minimum of text, but a wealth of illustrations consisting of details reproduced (not *redrawn*) from works of art which bear firm dates, and Dr. Cunnington's study of Englishwomen's dress in the nineteenth century carefully reviews each year of the century and is a *de luxe* publication which is extremely well illustrated. Apart from a very few articles in scattered magazines it would be difficult to find other titles to put beside these four.

But in spite of the scarcity of works which can in any way compare, as regards scholarship, with those in the field of the fine arts, there has been no shortage of books on costume during the first half of the twentieth century. Books on the subject have in fact been poured lavishly on to the market, and since they continue to appear in what seem to be ever-increasing numbers they must obviously find buyers.

The majority of these books are general histories of dress—of which the latest to appear in England is *A History of Fashion*, subtitled *A Visual Survey of Costume from Ancient Times to the Present Day*, by Douglas Gorsline (Batsford, £3 3s.). Its 1,800 illustrations are drawings after paintings, mostly famous, and pieces of sculpture. As is almost always the case these drawings, while they obviously attempt to catch the spirit of the originals, in fact, because of the inevitable intrusion of the draughtsman's personality, all look alike, as well as unconsciously losing the invaluable evidences of construction which original works always contain. This book, which was first published in the United States, contains little text. Its value is revealed by the fact that while 177 pages (including 16½ of text) are devoted to parts 1 and 2, the "Costume of the Ancient World" and "European Costume", part 3, "American Costume," contains 50 pages of illustrations and 6½ of text: here the drawings not only include Cowboys in general, but individuals such as Commodore Perry Owens, Bert

Masterson and Rose of Cimarron. If it seems incongruous that such characters, important as they may be to American history, should be included when the whole of the nineteenth dynasty in Egypt is represented by a drawing of one woman, it must be admitted that incongruities are not unusual in recent histories of costume. The book is useful since it *does* include some specialised information: one could wish that Mr. Gorsline had pursued his American



YELLOWSTONE KELLY (a typical costume of the Californian gold rush period, 1849).

studies further and left the history of fashion where it stood before he came into the field. It is especially difficult to forgive him for entering Cesare Vecellio, that great Venetian costume-historian of the sixteenth century, as a nineteenth century Frenchman in the bibliography, and for omitting Planché's *Cyclopaedia of Costume* entirely.

This year there has also appeared a book which at first sight seems to be a scholarly study—*Handbook of English Mediaeval Costume* by C. Willett and Phyllis Cunnington (Faber, 30s.). It is arranged and annotated with a neat precision that makes it easy to use, but it suffers from the weaknesses common to so many costume books: vague dating and redrawn illustrations. Its illustrations, in fact, contain a large proportion of drawings at second-hand.

A considerable number in the early period are actually drawn from Strutt's (1796!) drawings. One, from Strutt's drawing from the British Museum MS. Harley 2908, appears here as a dress of the eleventh century; Strutt labels it ninth century; the British Museum enters it as tenth century. Authorities on manuscripts consider that Harley 2908 was probably executed in the eleventh century, but are not willing to commit themselves definitely to within a hundred years. The inclusion of such examples as illustrations is both un-scholarly and misleading. Equally serious is the inclusion of an extremely inaccurate copy of a drawing in Harmand's *Jeanne d'Arc*. Investigation reveals that the original of Harmand's illustration is not English, as one might expect since it appears in a handbook of English Costume, nor French, as might be expected from a book on the wardrobe of St. Joan, but is a fresco from an undated series in the Lower Church of St. Francis in Assisi. Harmand takes considerable pains to explain that the type of sleeve contained in this painting must have been worn in France; the Cunningtons label it "rare" but quote no evidence that it was ever worn in England. In spite of its attractive format this book has added nothing, so far as I can discover, to earlier histories of costume.

A third recent publication is Dr. Willett Cunningham's *Englishwomen's Clothing in the Present Century* (Faber, £3 13s. 6d.). This is a sequel to his book on the nineteenth century and is to be welcomed since it contains much original research and breaks new ground. If it is less satisfactory than his earlier book, it must be remembered that this is partly because the author does not discriminate between the clothes of the *Haute Couture* and those which are mass-produced, but mainly because while there is more information on which to draw in one's own day, one cannot draw on it dispassionately—the emotions involved are too acute.

If the study of the history of costume

has so far been the Cinderella of scholarship this may seem a matter of indifference to those who are mainly interested in clothes on the stage, since accurate reconstructions of the actual clothes of the past are seldom dramatically significant. It is evident from publishers' advertisements that the majority of books on costume hope to find a large proportion of their buyers among stage designers, but the professional designer asked to produce a set of costumes for a play about, say, Venice in the second half of the sixteenth century, turns at once for inspiration to the paintings of Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese, the Bassano family, and by-passes the whole library of costume. So it is to the amateur designer, who frequently lacks the time (or the inclination) to embark on such research, that these books must appeal, and it is regrettable that he must look for inspiration to drawings which reflect the spirit of their originals so feebly and to texts which are almost always vague and often actually inaccurate. J. R. Planché's *Cyclopaedia of Costume*, published in 1879 is still the best of the historical surveys illustrated by drawings; for a comprehensive history illustrated by actual reproductions of original works we must look forward to the publication in this country of Millia Davenport's *Book of Costume*, two volumes of which have already appeared in the United States.

Admittedly the stage designer has to produce an imaginative version of authentic costume but unless the books at his disposal have that authenticity his imaginative version will be invalid and lifeless. If only to help the amateur designer (and it must be remembered that it is not only by him but by those wanting to date works of art from the evidence of costume, and by art students that such books are used) it is to be hoped that future costume historians and publishers will raise the standard of the study of historical costume to the level achieved in the field of art history.

PLAYS IN PERFORMANCE

by J. W. Lambert

SIR JOHN GIELGUD—how pleasant to be able to add that prefix—as Jaffier clutched Eileen Herlie as Belvidera to his bosom, raised in his right hand a dagger above their mingled heads, and spouted noble propositions in elevated tones, a living mezzotint. We in the audience sat with bated breath, and that we did so was a measure of the actor's greatness. We had in fact abandoned ourselves to a purely theatrical spell unthinkable at any time within the memory of the oldest living theatregoer: *Venice Preserv'd* brought back the excitement of all that magnified life which, badly done, has for generations been laughed at as "ham."

Earlier Jaffier, burning for revenge on his stony-hearted father-in-law, has decided to cut his links with the past and, as it were, join the Communist Party of his day. The curtain rises upon the deserted Rialto—one of Leslie Hurry's admirable sets—in a smoky green twilight. Hastening to his momentous rendezvous with the conspirators, Jaffier enters and passionately whispers . . . "I am here." Well, not a titter was heard: Gielgud sold even this staggering piece of bathos without the least difficulty. Presumably he refrained from cutting it quite deliberately, as a little test of his power over us. But it would be unfair to suggest that *Venice Preserv'd* was no more than a demonstration of mass-hypnosis: and it was not ineptitude that led to Otway's frequent plunges into what seems to us bathos. It was rather his use of simple language, close to our own and in itself remarkably effective, in an atmosphere which was developed from the conventions of Heroic Tragedy: in his own day Otway was much admired for his "naturalness."

Even repeated doses of Restoration comedy had hardly prepared us for the

"naturalness" of Otway's light relief—the interludes in the house of the courtesan Aquilina. Richard Wordsworth has for years, off and on, been playing dirty old men in plays of this period: he will never play a dirtier than this slobbering senator—hopping along the floor pretending to be a dog on a lead, demanding to be spat upon and kicked, he positively wallowed in senile depravity. And Pamela Brown's Aquilina scourged him with contempt as well as whips; she was a fine, swirling, flaming slut.

The principal characters are also surprisingly modern, and rather more than counters in a series of strong situations based on Love, Friendship and Honour; though naturally it is (as it always will be) the situations which first carry us away in the theatre. Belvidera, Jaffier's wife, is a broadly drawn tragic heroine, but there are also hints of a singular complexity in her; Eileen Herlie ignored these, but projected the general aspect of woe amply, going mad powerfully enough to banish all thoughts of that unkind burlesque, Tilburina in *The Critic*. Paul Scofield's Pierre, the born revolutionary and Jaffier's friend, the absolute reverse of his Witwoud in *The Way of the World*, was punched across with steely, sardonic passion. And as usual Sir John Gielgud's performance benefited vastly from the contrast with one of a tougher, coarser fibre, to say nothing of Peter Brook's direction; his Jaffier, torn between his wife and his friend, was not, as he may so easily seem, a vacillating idiot but a truly anguished man—and provided incidentally an object lesson in the difference between a beautiful voice and *The Voice Beautiful*.

This was by far the biggest and most stimulating native production in the period under review. It was also the last in Gielgud's season at Hammer-

smith; for at least the fourth time our leading actor has assembled an excellent company, used it in productions of the highest quality, and then disbanded it. What a pity the advantages of playing together under such leadership should be dissipated, the possibility of forming a real style squandered! What we miss was emphasised by the visit of the Comédie Française arranged

upon one, seemed here the most natural thing in the world—though it is fair to remember that Racine lends rather more support to them than does Otway. By ideal standards Marie Bell's Agrippine was in her anger too much a fishwife, too little an empress. But what a fishwife! Thundering terrible comminations she forced Jean Chevrier's muscular mad bull of a



DIANA WYNYARD and CECIL PARKER in "The Private Life of Helen" at the Globe Theatre. Photograph: Angus McBean.

by Sir Laurence Olivier. This began with a production of *Tartuffe* which was not very good; in a scrubby decor, supported by a patchy cast, Fernand Ledoux played Tartuffe simply as a confidence trickster, which is to stick to the letter of Molière and ignore the spirit. But it is inconceivable that a responsive theatregoer should not have been shaken by Racine's *Britannicus*. In Jean Marais' setting of aptly blood-red curtains the actors played out this terrible tale beneath the arms of an enormous, oppressive, mourning statue: and the heroic gesture, which worked on us so freshly when Gielgud ventured

Nero to his knees, and us with him. The whole cast played up to this tremendous standard except Britannicus himself—not a very important figure—who, well-scrubbed and wearing white, bounced about like the hero of a musical comedy from the 1920s, so that one kept thinking he had forgotten his tennis racquet. Then lastly we were given Marivaux's *Le Jeu de l'Amour et du Hasard*, a minuet of silver and lemon-yellow and scarlet, of lace and brocade. Helene Perdrière was not the equal of the blissfully remembered Madeleine Renaud, but we could hardly match her; how few British actresses are both

exquisitely dainty and full of vigour and personality. Jacques Charon, tall, beaky, bulgy-eyed, proved a notable buffoon: for my taste he leaned rather too far towards low comedy but he was explosively funny and most stylishly vulgar as an upish though bewildered valet, and, in the afterpiece, gobbled his way deliciously through Musset's *On ne Saurait Penser à Tout*. These enchanting comedies of manners are, like the Racine, things we can never do in English; but we can learn from their performance as well as enjoy it—especially in matters of civilised speech and expert timing.

Sacha Guitry was another French visitor, another stylist. It was fascinating, for ten minutes or so, to watch the magnetic professionalism of this ponderous charmer; unfortunately the piece he had knocked together went on much longer than that. Nor was the visit of an Italian company under the late Ruggero Ruggeri a success. In two Pirandello plays the octogenarian Signor Ruggeri himself fluted vigorously, and was warmly supported by a fine actress Andreina Pagnani. Otherwise the playing rose approximately to the level of a kindergarten end-of-term performance; but only just.

Of the remaining home products the best has been the revival of *The Apple Cart*. Like the success of *Venice Preserv'd* this was something of a portent; who would have imagined the champion of conversational ping-pong joining in this Shavian game of royal tennis? But Noel Coward plays an admirable game. Wit of course, poise, tenderness and endurance are all his; the long speeches unfold not, it is true, with the full paternal mellowness of Sir Cedric Hardwicke, yet with an enticing, easy and compelling rhythm. But everybody else in the hand-picked cast seems (is it only by contrast?) to be over-acting; Margaret Leighton, for instance, makes heavy weather of Orinthia. The lady is not a minx, and Miss Leighton is too tall to impersonate one; but she does her best, hopping, striding, curling up

and straightening out until one feels quite exhausted for her.

The Arts Theatre blotted its copy-book with a "special Coronation production" which is best passed over in silence, but it has achieved worthwhile revivals of *The Seagull* and of *Arms and the Man*. In both, oddly enough, the men were much better than the women, especially Michael Gwynn's Konstantin. In the Shaw piece Alec Clunes and Robin Bailey made a cheerful duet, so to speak, for trombone and cornet. As an afterpiece to the military band Wolf Mankowitz's *The Bespoke Overcoat*, an episodic Jewish anecdote dripping with what is I believe called *schmalz*, was not really very good. But the notion of ending with a one-act play should be encouraged.

The rest of the new plays are a cheerful handful of comedies and farces, two American, one French and one, by no means the least entertaining, very English. We are so rich in players in the mysterious genre known as light comedy that one could wish some of them would work their way up into high comedy. Here are Brian Reece, a delightful simple-hearted springheel Jack, despite the struggle with an American accent, in *The Seven Year Itch* (an odious title for a pleasing little play); Robert Flemyng croakily wicked in *The Moon is Blue*, yet another piece about the middle-aged man and the teasing young woman; and, harassed, angular and endearing, Jack Buchanan in *As Long as They're Happy*, not to mention David Hutcheson, who has a face like a split melon. Another more than promising light comedian has come to light in Hugh Paddick, a spry, eyebrow-cocking fellow who spins the plot of a charming revival of *The Two Bouquets*. It is difficult to believe that André Roussin can have written anything as dull as *The Private Life of Helen*, which must surely have had a rough passage across the Channel. Its sole merit, no small one, is that it enables us to gaze at length upon Diana Wynyard. There were also, it

is true, two straight plays serious in intention. *The Uninvited Guest*, though by his wife, wasted John Mills's time and ours. It was a curious survival of an old-fashioned family drama—for middle-class families, that is, and about an upper-class family, all cardboard.

a concoction of staggering absurdity and unashamed cliché.

For the rest, it has been Shakespeare, Shakespeare everywhere, and much of it raises acutely the question whether there is any truth in Chesterton's paradox that if a thing is worth doing



THE BIRMINGHAM REPERTORY COMPANY'S production of "King Henry the Sixth" at the Old Vic. Jack May as the young King. Photo: Lisel Haas.

William Douglas Home's *The Bad Samaritan*, on the other hand, though well acted by Michael Denison, George Relph, Ronald Lewis and Heather Stannard, and adorned by Virginia McKenna, seems to me merely silly,

it is worth doing badly. It is well that we should have Shakespeare in the Open Air Theatre; it is well that we should have him (and Ben Jonson and Co., very limited) in Bernard Miles' gay theatre in the Royal Exchange; it

is well that we should have him taken out into the highways and byways by the young enthusiasts of the Elizabethan Theatre Company. But if the performances are in one way or another dull or inadequate, as all these have been, I very much fear they are likely, by boring chance playgoers, to do more harm than good.

The Bristol Old Vic's *Henry V*, though also inadequate, was not dull. James Cairncross made an excellent, spiky Pistol; David Bird a strong, closely-felt Fluellen. The King himself, however, was a total failure, presenting the melancholy spectacle of a young actor aping several leading players, but achieving only an effect of knockknees and strangulation. More exciting—but then less familiar—were the Birmingham Repertory Company's performances of all three parts of *Henry VI*. With good but not outstanding players, Douglas Seale gave a fine demonstration of teamwork, so that these cantankerous chronicles are filled with life and character and colour.

The parent Old Vic marked the Coronation with *Henry VIII*, which turned out to be a terrifying tumult with some excellent moments; notably that unsettling, silent colloquy when Henry astonishes the court by calling for Cranmer, not Wolsey. Paul Rogers contributed a fine study of a familiar figure, especially in rare moments of repose. Gwen Ffrangcon-Davies's lachrymose voice accentuated all too much the whining self-righteousness of the Queen; Alexander Knox's Wolsey barked and snarled a good deal but rose, so to speak, nobly to his fall. Yet granted that this is as much a spectacle as a play, surely we might have been given the big set pieces straight, the verse in its own sweep, not broken up by little bits of business? What with jumping and tumbling, spitting and coughing, dancing, tripping-up or throwing hymn-books about, the cast had little time to act. I begin to think that over-ingenious producer's real name is Typhoon Guthrie.

CONTEMPORARY BRITISH DRAMATISTS

by Clifford Bax

4. Terence Rattigan

SOMEDAY a student of our contemporary drama will realise that love-scenes have gone quite out of fashion. The few love-scenes in Bridie's work are perfunctory and sometimes banal. Priestley nearly always prefers the solidly married couple. Coward can hardly bring a man and a woman together without seizing his chance of that sure-fire effect in the theatre—a quarrel.

This is an interesting symptom. For instance, in most Elizabethan or Jacobean plays love-scenes are practically the staple fare, despite the absence of women-players. Is it that the anti-romantic influence of Shaw has abolished Romeo and Juliet, Rosalind and Orlando, Paolo and Francesca? What has happened? Is it that love-scenes have now been relegated to the cinema? Is it that two world-wars have "debased the coinage of love" and made our younger people unromantic towards one another? Or is it that a love-scene will be embarrassing if it has not the eloquence and ardour of Marlowe or Shakespeare? Finally, can it be that only when there is a leisured or aristocratic class does romantic idealism exist?

Terence Rattigan is no exception to this change in the theatre; and that is the more noteworthy because, although he delineates men effectively, he shows, over and over again, that he is most skilled in the portrayal of courageous women. This was not apparent in his



TERENCE RATTIGAN

first and startling success, *French Without Tears*, for here we found ourselves watching the wild efforts of English would-be diplomats to master the extremely difficult language of France. No one will ever understand why James Agate so repeatedly maligned this delightful comedy. At once, in 1936, Rattigan revealed a plentiful sense of humour, and showed that he could keep a play in motion. He fell back with *After the Dance* (1939). The characters are superficial specimens of the decade and, if they are no sillier than Coward's *dramatis personae* of the nineteen-twenties, they do, unfortunately, lack Coward's gaiety. Moreover, the dialogue wanders about like water before the plumber has arrived. Again in *While the Sun Shines* (1943) Rattigan manipulated marionettes of a similar kind. He termed this piece a comedy, but it is very close to farce. An amusing American lieutenant, a French officer, and Lord Harpenden, who is amiable but so witless that he cannot attain a commission in the Navy, are all convinced that they can win the hand of an entirely worthless young woman: and Harpenden's father,

the Duke of Ayr and Stirling, is yet another ridiculous stage-duke. Why should these dukes always be asinine? Perhaps it started with Chesterton's *Magic*. The only character in this play who can awake our sympathy is a girl named Molly Crum. She almost marries the brainless Earl, but has the honesty in the end to admit that she could not promise to be a faithful wife.

In *The Winslow Boy* (1946) Terence Rattigan made a partial come-back. As everybody knows, the play is founded upon a real case, that of a lad at Osborne who was charged with stealing a five-shilling postal-order. His father, as we ought to expect, will sooner ruin himself than the honour of his boy. Here was a fine theme, and Galsworthy would have made something monumental out of it. Rattigan drove it with a slack rein, introducing so much background chatter that we were in danger of forgetting the boy's anguish and the perturbation of his father. The author should have kept the boy much more in the foreground.

However, Rattigan had now become a popular playwright. People would go to see "a Rattigan play," although as a rule they go only to see a well-known player, preferably a film-star. Because of this mounting reputation, a manager actually dared to give us a double-bill: *Harlequinade* and *The Browning Version* (1948). We need not linger over *Harlequinade*. It is merely a skit upon a self-important actor on tour. On the other hand, *The Browning Version* deserved all its success. It is a tender study of an elderly schoolmaster who is a failure both as a teacher and as a husband, and the play is, I believe, the first to which the author ventured to give an unhappy ending.

Even in *Flare Path* (1942) he had shied away from tragedy or even pathos, and yet in this piece he used deeper emotions than in his earlier work. Here we have a serious study of a group of airmen who have to set out upon a bombing expedition—and of

their women-folk who have to await their homecoming, or their failure to come home. The men are heroic but of course they do not regard themselves as heroes. Rattigan, with fine perception, concentrates our interest upon the endurance of the women. The play develops with admirable suspense, and we become as anxious as the women themselves are concerning the fate of those gallant men. We should not do so unless every person in the play were in some degree likeable.

Flare Path would not have been successful without a lavish use of the slang and the understatements which characterised the Air Force during the war, but, unfortunately, this virtue will shorten the life-span of the play because in ten years' time the airmen's jargon will have become almost unintelligible. A playwright has either to compete with the newspapers in his topicality or with the classics in his use of timeless language and emotion. Still, it was a flash of genius which caused Rattigan to introduce a Polish airman who is only happy when he is fighting the enemy. Our own men do their duty: the Pole flies forth with gusto. There is fine drama when the lowly-born English wife of the Polish Count stoically accepts the general supposition that he has been shot down and ended up in "the drink" (that is, the sea): but when, almost miraculously he turns up, much later than any of the others, we feel that the author, having harrowed our sympathy, lets us down by providing a comfortable close. It is as though Hamlet were to take the throne of Denmark.

After his delineation of a failure (the schoolmaster in *The Browning Version*), Rattigan tried his hand at the success-story of Alexander the Great (1949). The design is too episodic, and the dialogue so colloquial that we sigh for a touch of Marlowe or Stephen Phillips. Bridie said that the peril of writing about world-famous personages in present-day idiom is that we may

vulgarise them—make them so ordinary that their achievements become incredible. In *Adventure Story* we watch Alexander's character deteriorating as his marvellous conquests progress. He becomes jealous of any General who might challenge his popularity, and suspicion leads him to commit political murders. History very seldom compresses itself into dramatic form, but so talented a playwright ought surely to have constructed a less ramshackle building.

In 1952 Terence Rattigan presented by far the finest play which, up to the present, he has written. *The Deep Blue Sea* gives us a profound and sensitive study of a woman who greatly loves a man who is himself incapable of caring passionately about anyone. She finds that she is between the Devil of living with somebody who merely likes her very well and the Deep Blue Sea of suicide. She attempts suicide but is rescued by other lodgers in the house. They include a queer character, a foreign doctor who has been disqualified and who makes a living as a bookie. So far as I know, this is the first time that any playwright has psychologised an over-loving, frustrated woman; and the peculiar doctor has certainly made no previous appearance on our stage. Once again, Rattigan triumphed in portraying the immense courage of women: and this play shows that, unlike Alexander, he has new worlds to conquer. He will do so.

A NEW DIRECTORY of DRAMA ADJUDICATORS

Copies may be obtained
by Festival Secretaries

Hon. Secretary:

GUILD OF DRAMA ADJUDICATORS

26 Bedford Square - London, W.C.1.

Members of the Guild are not permitted to advertise

Australian Theatre To-day

by Michael Langham

who, at the suggestion of the British Drama League, was invited by the Adult Education Board of the University of Western Australia, to spend five months conducting drama classes and producing plays in Perth. He also visited Melbourne and Sydney.

THE professional theatre in Australia is almost exclusively controlled by two managements operating in the Eastern States. The enormous distances and high cost of transport seem to discourage these firms from touring, and induce them to restrict their activities mainly to Sydney

less of course an Australian artist has won acclaim overseas.) As a result there are very few professional Australian actors and actresses. Those that would otherwise go to make up this profession (including the dramatists) content themselves with radio work, or turn to other jobs, or leave Australia



WESTERN AUSTRALIA'S SHAKESPEARE'S FESTIVAL at Swan Hill, Murray River: the large gum trees provide an essentially Australian setting for the Procession which forms part of this effort to establish a State centre for Shakespearean production.

and Melbourne. They are concerned solely with "show business" and present, with financial success, indifferent versions of popular London and New York pieces. They employ imported "leads" and often supporting casts as well, who are generally no more talented than local artists. ("Nothing Australian is any good" is a widely held principle in theatrical affairs; un-

in despair to seek work in British and American theatres.

In the light of these facts, I do not think the professional theatre can be said to be aiding the development of Australian drama. Certainly the tours of imported companies like the Old Vic and the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre provide valuable stimulus and help train audiences to be ready to

appreciate the indigenous drama, when it emerges. But to the serious Australian theatre-artist the high standard of these tours intensifies frustration and serves to lure him away from his own country and the work that needs to be done there. It is no doubt a wise and proper step for him to travel to the other side of the globe where he can, if he is lucky, learn his craft in the best schools; but it is a sad thought that when he has completed this training there is nothing to draw him back to Australia, where his skill and knowledge would be invaluable. His potentialities thus become lost to his country.

Unlike the professional theatre, the amateur and little theatre movement is everywhere vigorously active and generally well supported. The quality of acting, judged by amateur standards, is often very high indeed, but development of the movement is checked by the dissipation of talent into too many groups, many needlessly hostile to the others. Very occasionally new Australian plays are performed by these groups, but none of the producers seem sufficiently skilled to stage an untried script with success. This is not generally admitted, and the dramatists (not the producers) are blamed for the failures, often without justification. This has led to the national dramatists being summarily dismissed by players and audience alike as incompetent, and to the growth of a deep-rooted and dangerous prejudice against indigenous drama.

Despite this prejudice, many still write. I read about eighty plays by Australian playwrights. Half of them were interesting, and about 10 per cent. worth producing; all lacked technical skill—a skill which, I believe, can only be learnt by the dramatist seeing his work competently staged. Without really talented directors this is an impossibility. And so, in terms of the drama, the exciting story of Australia remains almost entirely untold, although there are many wanting and, with assistance, well able to tell it.

If the art of the drama is to find full expression it needs, more than any other art form, capable organisation. In Australia, apart from the commercial theatre which is concerned more with business than art, there are few signs of this. Its absence is in my opinion the chief reason why the drama is the most backward of all the arts there. There is much talk of the need for this organisation. In fact, over the past few years, there has been considerable agitation regarding the establishment of a National Theatre and much speculation as to who should run it. Many individuals representing amateur groups or institutions have offered themselves in a spirit of rivalry as would-be local Lilian Baylisses, only needing a subsidy from Federal or State Government to put the Australian Drama on the map. A few years ago, one State granted such a subsidy; but the results of the "professional" opera, drama and ballet companies launched with it, both artistically and financially, were not of a kind to encourage other States to follow this example. Organisation for good theatre consequently remains forlornly non-existent. There are no sound leaders.

I believe that Australian audiences are ripe for extensive theatrical development. The commercial theatre is not unaware of this fact. Indeed, an expansion of commercial theatre, both in quantity and quality, is likely in the near future. If this occurs it will almost certainly amount to an expansion of British and American drama, not Australian. Now, because of the extreme inferiority complex of Australians over theatrical affairs, this will tend not so much to encourage as to suppress the natural growth of the native drama.

What is needed is the setting-up of some permanent form of organisation and, so long as Australians refuse to respect their own leaders in the theatre, this can only be successfully achieved with efficient, trained personnel from overseas.

I think it is premature to talk of a National Theatre; there must first be State theatres and professional repertory companies in each of the main cities. Perhaps, if nationwide control is deemed necessary, a National Drama Advisory Board might be created to correlate the activities of the State theatres in the same way as the Australian Broadcasting Commission controls its various stations throughout the Commonwealth. Later this might

set up. No two States are alike in the conditions that would face them over creating such a theatre. The situation, for instance, would be far more complex, politically and personally, in Sydney and Melbourne than in Perth, Adelaide and Hobart, although the theatre standards of these cities are not dissimilar. Each State would have to cope with the challenge in its own way and in its own time. Quite probably one of the last three would be the first to establish a State Theatre. The National Drama Advisory Board could then ensure that subsequent State theatre enterprises profited from the experience of the first.



"TWELFTH NIGHT" AT SWAN HILL.

develop into the National Theatre, the Test eleven drawing the best from the State elevens.

It is surely not too much to hope, in a country that is alive to the importance of the simultaneous advance of cultural and material development, that the necessary funds for creating and maintaining non-profit-making State theatres and companies would be obtainable from State governments, institutions, and individuals, provided a sound organisational basis could be

Kingdom for a term of years. These persons must be of high standing, for a mistaken choice could fatally cripple the whole enterprise. Sound advice on their selection should be sought from an advisory panel in London working through the National Drama Advisory Board in Australia. The British Council could fulfil this important function.

The company selected should consist predominantly of Australian artists, with one or two from overseas (preferably Australian also) to stiffen the

standard, which must be considerably higher than that of the amateur movement. The Theatre should then encourage three of the best local dramatists by paying them a retaining fee.

In all the cities mentioned, except Hobart, a play could run comfortably for three weeks, provided the standard was high enough. The company should not tour the surrounding towns and villages, for I believe that this practice tends to lower standards; later an auxiliary company could be formed to do this important pioneering work. Nor do I think it wise for the Theatre to attempt to run a drama school until it has fully established itself. When the companies were launched the National Drama Advisory Board could arrange for their interchange; subsequently for festivals; and eventually, perhaps, for a National Theatre.

It would no doubt still be advisable for Australian theatre artists, especially scene designers, to train in the United Kingdom and thus gain the stimulus of European culture (such training might eventually be organised by each State Theatre with scholarships) but, training completed, there would now at least be something alive and growing at home to which the artist could return and devote his energies.

Societies who make their own scenery will benefit from the recent removal of purchase tax and certain price controls. Brodie and Middleton, the well-known suppliers, are now able to offer hessian and fireproofed canvas at little more than half their previous prices, and there are also substantial reductions in colours, dyes and sundries, with discount for quantity.

J. W. Furse & Co., the Nottingham lighting specialists, have just published a useful booklet, *Basic Stage Lighting and Equipment*, by E. E. Faraday (price 3s. 6d.). The book is written by a technical expert in language that can readily be understood by the layman. It is fully illustrated.

Stage Electric Equipment Ltd. have issued an illustrated catalogue of their equipment and accessories. Their showrooms are at 138 Wardour Street, London, W.1, where callers are welcomed.



The Collected Plays of

Terence Rattigan

in two volumes, each with a long introduction

VOL. I

French Without Tears
Flare Path
While the Sun Shines
Love in Idleness
The Winslow Boy

VOL. II

The Browning Version
Harlequinade
Adventure Story
Who Is Sylvia?
The Deep Blue Sea

15s. net each volume

The Oliviers

FELIX BARKER

'Something of the quality of a first-rate adventure story; it is exciting, fast-moving, stimulating.'—

Spectator

'A real attempt at an assessment of the quality of Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh as artists and as human beings.'—W. A. DARLINGTON (*Daily Telegraph*)

'Not only an excellent and straightforward account of their own development as actor and actress, but a view of at least one aspect of the English theatre during the past twenty years.'—VERNON FANE (*Sphere*)

'A good book whose merits should win it a permanent place in the literature of the theatre. It is dignified, careful, informative and well-mannered.'—JOHN CONNELL (*Evening News*)

84 illustrations

15s. net

HAMISH HAMILTON

The New York Theatre Guild

by Rosamond Gilder

the distinguished American theatre critic and lecturer, who until recently was Editor of "Theatre Arts Monthly."

THE years between the two World Wars formed a golden epoch in the American theatre; a period of achievement in play-writing, of exploration and invention in scene design, of charm and brilliance in acting. And very near the centre of this activity was the Theatre Guild, the only organised theatre in New York that has withstood the inroads of time and change, of depression and war and of its own centrifugal nature. In *The Magic Curtain** Lawrence Langner tells the story of the Theatre Guild and of his own double, or rather triple, life as a patent expert, a director of the Guild and a playwright, in an amiable autobiography that contains much pertinent information on the American scene. One of the founders of the Washington Square Players, the pre-World War I forerunner of the Guild, he is now its co-director with Theresa Helburn. They are the sole survivors of the Board of six which fought its way through twenty years of fruitful productivity.

Mr. Langner was born in Wales and grew up in London where he worked in a firm of chartered patent agents and took his first steps in a business career that brought him to the United States in 1911. He has been an American citizen since 1917 and is now head of his own international patent firm. He has pursued his professional career vigorously, serving on government advisory committees and organising the National Inventor's Council which contributed important services during the war years. His interest in the theatre began in the pre-1914 war period, when young men and women, in revolt against the last vestiges of Victorianism, gathered in eager bands

around wine-stained café tables in Greenwich Village, Bloomsbury and Montmartre to talk, write poetry and found the millenium. It was the period of the Little Magazine and the Art Theatre. Excitement was in the tobacco-filled air. The Liberal Club and the Provincetowners on MacDougal Street were seething with ideas and ideals. Langner and a group of enthusiasts experimented with one-act plays at the little Bandbox Theatre on 57th Street but called themselves the Washington Square Players, since New York's Bohemia was their natural home.

After the war this drive toward a new theatre was resumed on a more serious level. The one-act play and amateurism were abandoned and the Theatre Guild with its six directors (eventually these were Lawrence Langner, Theresa Helburn, Lee Simonson, Helen Westley, Philip Moeller and Maurice Wertheim) came into being. Its first offering, Benavente's *The Bonds of Interest*, was almost its last, but a quick rallying of forces and borrowing of dollars resulted in a remarkable production of *John Ferguson* by St. John Ervine with Augustin Duncan and Dudley Digges in the leads—and the Theatre Guild was launched on its long career. This was in May, 1919. Since then some 180 plays have been given—an average of five a year for the thirty-five years of the Guild's existence. During most of this period the Guild was sole custodian of the plays of the redoubtable Bernard Shaw. From *Heartbreak House* through the "unproducible" *Back to Methuselah*, including *St. Joan* and *Caesar and Cleopatra* (which inaugurated the Guild's own Theatre in 1925) the long and the short of Shaw were given by the Guild. Mr. Langner says that the

* Harrap, 30s

Guild made approximately \$350,000 for Mr. Shaw and that he cost it about the same amount; but the Guild was fulfilling its appropriate function as the House of Shaw and gained great honour by presenting his plays, as also the works of Eugene O'Neill. His early plays were presented by the Provincetown Players and then O'Neill himself formed a joint management with Kenneth Macgowan and Robert Edmond Jones. As though to make up for lost time, the Guild produced both *Marco Millions* and *Strange Interlude* in 1928, following these with *Mourning Becomes Electra* in 1931 and continuing to give all O'Neill's plays, the latest being *The Iceman Cometh* in 1946.

These were the great days of the Theatre Guild and the adventures and calamities and triumphs of production are fascinating to anyone interested in the mechanics of theatre. Excerpts from his correspondence with Shaw and O'Neill form a real contribution to theatrical lore, while the glimpses back of back-stage are often instructive. Mr. Langner frequently remarks that the Guild was conducted "as a kind of dog-fight." That the meetings of the Board of six were tempestuous, to put it mildly, indicates a quality in its make-up that may account for the Guild's longevity: they were all fighters, and tough fighters, in the cause of good theatre and each one of the six was sure that he or she held the key to its achievement. Certainly the first decades of the Guild's life were brilliantly successful, as the long list of major productions included in the book testify. In the twenties these were mainly European works, distinguished dramas by such authors as Paul Claudel and H. R. Lenormand, Arnold Bennett and A. A. Milne, Molnar and Ernst Vajda, Andreyev and Evreinov, Kaiser, Werfel, Pirandello and many more. By the 1930's the American playwrights predominate: O'Neill, Maxwell Anderson, Sidney Howard, Elmer Rice, Robert Sherwood, S. N. Behrman, Philip Barry, and Saroyan. Since 1939

Mr. Langner and Miss Helburn are sole directors of the Theatre Guild; in summer Mr. Langner and his wife, Armina Marshall, operate Mr. Langner's own Westport Playhouse, and, undaunted by the general crisis in the theatre, Mr. Langner dreams of an American Stratford "somewhere in Connecticut."

Mr. Langner's "third man" has not been idle, for his original interest in the theatre lay in playwriting. Since the Board found it wise to decree that the Guild should not produce a member's plays, Mr. Langner's have been presented by other managements or at the Westport Playhouse. Of the twenty-four full-length plays he has written singly or in collaboration, sixteen have been produced, *The Pursuit of Happiness* (involving the genial Puritan custom of "bundling") being the most widely known.

It is, however, as the vigorous—and sometimes ruthless—director of the Theatre Guild that Mr. Langner will be remembered. His book will interest especially those concerned with building permanent theatre organisations in the future. To those who know certain facets of this story there are significant gaps, and, of course, the inevitable slanting toward one man's point of view. Nor has Mr. Langner the literary style or creative imagination of a Harold Clurman whose book about the Group Theatre, an even more explosive theatre organisation of the nineteen-thirties, is so arresting. Lee Simonson, designer-in-chief for the Theatre Guild through its most brilliant years, has written from quite another angle in his stimulating book, *Part of a Lifetime*, which also presents in its portfolio of designs a reminder of the Guild's high artistic standards. But in *The Magic Curtain* Mr. Langner has staked out his claim to fame as co-architect and continuing operator of this unique theatrical enterprise, whose survival is an extraordinary phenomenon in a world so constantly "in a state of chassis" as the theatre.

STRATFORD 1953: Second Instalment

by W. Bushill-Matthews

THE current season at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre is notably free from freakish attempts to introduce novelty for its own sake. The producers are soberly determined to allow Shakespeare to reign supreme. Yet sobriety need not hamper intelligent originality, as is shown in George Devine's production

pelled by the need to satisfy herself that her amorous charms will always be strong enough to keep her lover. Michael Redgrave's Antony is ageing, a soldier who wants to enjoy while he may the warmth of passionate love-making. Marius Goring shows Octavius Caesar as a Cromwellian ruler who places devotion to duty above every-



MARIUS GORING and YVONNE MITCHELL in "The Taming of the Shrew."

of *The Taming of the Shrew*. The permanent setting designed by Vivienne Kernot, a New Zealander, is most ingenious, with its changing back-grounds and moving mural panels.

Yvonne Mitchell's Katherine is a gypsy-like creature whose submission at the end suggests that she has learned that it pays to humour one's spouse. Yet Marius Goring as Petruchio does not take her taming for granted, and his occasional hint of anxiety enhances our pleasure in his final triumph.

Watching Peggy Ashcroft in *Antony and Cleopatra*, we feel that she is im-

thing in life and expects all around him to sacrifice their human feeling for their conquering country, whilst Harry Andrews by stressing the unswerving loyalty of Enobarbus makes his fall more moving.

George Devine's *King Lear* is set upon a bare stage, save for a group of boulders reminiscent of a miniature Stonehenge and a pair of gigantic castle-like doors, hinged at the entrances to the apron stage, and swinging into varying positions with the changing scenes.

Michael Redgrave in the title role

never loses his kingship nor, in spite of growing infirmity of body and mind, his concern for others. Even in the storm he shelters the Fool, and interests himself in Edgar's mental ruin. Lear's

terrors of the wind and the rain to the weariness of the shelterless creature out of his depth in conditions beyond his ken. Noel Howlett as faithful Gloucester is appealing in his simple sincerity



MICHAEL REDGRAVE as Antony and PEGGY ASHCROFT as Cleopatra.

serenity on the cliff at Dover increases our pity for him in his anguish over Cordelia at the end. Goneril and Regan are less villainously conceived than usual, and therefore perhaps more credible. Marius Goring's Fool begins with the affected confidence of the court jester, and passes through the

purpose, and Robert Shaw, one of this season's most promising actors, is a debonair yet calculating Edmund determined to hit his target. A clear-cut Kent is portrayed by Harry Andrews, an actor who carries complete conviction in every Shakespearean role he undertakes.

MICHAEL
duce
two

THE
first
in a
the
gree
look
insic
and
ring
the
but
spiri
desi
expr
enth
abou
had
thin
new

In
pres
beca
into
a n
plac
and
prof
thei
tage
trad
shill
bilit
Sha
ever

The
was
per
grea
not
han
at a
the

The Theatre Under the Two Elizabeths

was the theme of the *British Drama League's Theatre Week* which, appropriately in *Coronation Year*, took place in London. Below are extracts from some of the addresses given during the Week. Later we hope to print Mr. Evan John's speech on "*The Dramatist under the two Elizabeths.*"

MICHAEL MACOWAN who introduced the Week drew a parallel between the two periods.

The first Elizabethans built England's first theatres. Before that, they played in all sorts of places; in great castles, on the steps of cathedrals, on village greens. We have our theatres, yet we look for other places to play in; we go inside the church, into college halls and gardens, into chalk pit or boxing ring. This seems the opposite of what the earlier Elizabethans were doing, but it is really inspired by the same spirit of artistic adventure, the same desire for new and different forms of expression. People who have these enthusiasms to-day are rather exclusive about them; I doubt if the Elizabethans had the same tendency to discount anything which is not along the line of new discovery.

In the same way as many styles of presentation are to be seen to-day, because one thing is always turning into another, so in their day there were a number of styles. For the first time places were specially built for plays, and I think that in a sense the theatrical profession was new. Once they put up their buildings there were great advantages for the actor. He could say: "This trade by which I used to earn an odd shilling from time to time has possibilities; it is a career. Look what Shakespeare made out of it!" Actors even began to be respected a little. The old "rogue and vagabond" stuff was not so frequently heard, and if a performance was applauded by the great spirits of the age the actor did not walk down the street next morning hanging his head. They spoke the verse at a terrific speed in those days, but as the dramatist was nearly always in

charge of his performers you can be pretty sure that the words were heard, and that the subtlety of thought, and still more the extraordinary subtlety of feeling in the plays, was successfully conveyed to the audience.

To-day young actors come into a profession which offers wonderful advantages, for we are blessed with an astonishing galaxy of outstanding talent, and they can come into contact with the greatest and most mature artists. They are safe also from the danger of a too rigid division of styles. People now living have seen acting change from a rather set style, through the introduction of naturalism and its development to a point at which it could go no further (and was indeed becoming a danger) to the present return of poetry and the re-discovery of Shakespeare. We are re-discovering the past in an enriching way; never has so much Shakespeare been acted up and down the country, and not only because it is *Coronation year*. But each development has been an addition: never a subtraction.

The young people to-day inherit a synthesis of the many ideas that have been coming in over the last eighty years. They have high qualities of courage and vitality. When I started on the stage we never thought of getting married in our early years. Young actors now get married and face the most astonishing risks of bringing up families in this precarious profession, where it is an unending struggle to earn one's living, and only a very few can. They are serious-minded and cope intelligently with the difficulties of Shakespeare and the many subtle plays which are being written to-day, without being solemn or priggishly intellectual.

These actors have more in common with the first Elizabethans than with any other age.

NORMAN MARSHALL spoke on the architectural aspect of the theme.

At the moment there is a strong desire to return to something approximating to the Elizabethan stage, not only for Shakespeare but for other kinds of plays as well. What attracts people towards this sort of stage? First of all, the intimacy between actors and audience. The Elizabethan theatre had the essential characteristic of a good theatre, which is that the greatest number of people are as near to the actors as possible. At Shakespeare's Globe 2,500 to 3,000 people were packed into a very small space. (Tyrone Guthrie says that people are jammed together at cup-ties and Coronation processions, and if they really want a theatre as exciting as that let them be jammed together again. But Fire Regulations would never permit it.) According to generally accepted measurements, the furthest spectator at the Globe was not more than 18 feet from the actor standing on the edge of the forestage.

What happened to bring the theatre up to date? The forestage started to shrink and the picture frame came out to meet it. Part of the audience were still overlooking the acting area, but gradually the actors were pushed back behind the proscenium arch; the stage boxes remained for a time on the stage itself, but at last the forestage vanished altogether behind the picture frame. Meanwhile, a change was taking place in the audience. They had thinned out to be more comfortably seated and gradually they got further away from the actor because the horseshoe balconies (as at Bristol) no longer allowed a good view of the receded stage.

To-day many producers and actors want to abolish the picture-frame and get right out among the audience. It is not a new idea. Reinhardt started

the movement to make the audience and actor one, to break down all artificial barriers.

The small playhouse is no longer economic and auditoriums are getting larger and larger. Touring is becoming a nightmare. Many theatres were in fact built with the idea that if live productions come to an end the building will do for films. Wood has been replaced by concrete; the acoustics are therefore hard—all the softness has gone.

The extreme form of the desire to get the actor into the audience is the arena theatre. Seeing an arena performance for the first time you may be put off by the spectacle of part of the audience facing you, but they say you get used to it. The fundamental weakness seems to be that actor and producer cannot make the same effect on the whole audience at the same moment. Although an actor's back may be very expressive, can he express anything really subtle with it? Strindberg wrote *The Stronger* for a famous actress who had a remarkable command of facial expression. The play is a monologue in which a woman talks without interruption to another. She sits with her back to the audience so that their whole attention is riveted on the face of the silent one. It would be quite impossible to produce a play like that in an arena. Moreover, you cannot group as convincingly in an arena theatre, where groups have to be acceptable to the audience all the way round. People who defend this type of theatre say audiences can imagine something much more vivid than the scene designer can create. I wonder.

ROBERT SPEAIGHT gathered up the threads of the *Week's* discussions.

Ever since we were children it has been a thrill to go and sit in the darkness of the auditorium: to wait for the curtain to go up, all agog to know what was behind that fourth wall. We should have been disappointed if we had come in and seen the stage set before us.

Part of the surprise of playgoing was in the lifting of that curtain. Part of the mystery of the actor was that he lived and moved behind those footlights—that barrier. The psychology of our playgoing has been built up on a very firm separation between the actor and his audience. That is difficult to get over. The proscenium has become for the actor a coat of mail or shield. But it seems to me that there is something to be gained by the audience's participation with the actor, and by breaking through this only too solid, though invisible, barrier of the footlights.

I acted on William Poel's platform stage which was as often as not built out over the stalls of some famous house of variety so that we were very near the dress circle; there were the groundlings in the pit and we acted to the dress circle. We all had an enormous sense of liberty. But Poel had reconstructed the Shakespearean stage to its original dimensions—40 feet broad, which is the same as Drury Lane. I contend it is no use doing Shakespeare on a small stage. You must have space to move about in the great scenes; those difficult little scenes are perfectly explained if you enter with an interlocutor and go off the other side. You are so close to the audience on such a stage that you can act with intimacy; you can speak quietly and naturally, and with full personal meaning. Even in so "interior" a soliloquy as "To be or not to be," you can see how proximity helps; you are there in the middle of the audience and you put before them this agonising problem of life or death. The approach is direct.

When it comes to our attempts to create an Elizabethan theatre, inevitably we are not satisfied. There is the great work of Nugent Monck at the Maddermarket. (Mr. Monck wrote on his theatre in *DRAMA*, Spring 1949.) This is an Elizabethan theatre in miniature, yet it is probably the best we have. The General Assembly Hall at Edinburgh, where Guthrie and

others have put on brilliant performances, gives something very satisfactory—a big platform stage surrounded on three sides. The thing lacking there is the upper stage. The Mermaid might be described more properly as a Renaissance theatre. It is too shallow by half for a satisfactory Shakespeare production, but it has got the upper stage.

We cannot help looking for the snags of the Elizabethan theatre itself. Admittedly it was a fairly rudimentary theatre trying to house a very complicated form of drama. When Shakespeare's company acted, say the closet scene in *Hamlet*, in that inner chamber, how much of it can have been visible, or even audible, to people sitting in the galleries on either side? Didn't the confinement in that little box rob the scene of its effect? William Poel said that the Elizabethan audience did not mind how much they saw as long as they heard what the actors said. That is obviously an unpractical principle on which to reconstruct the Elizabethan theatre, for audiences to-day demand to see and hear everything.

Do we want an exact replica of the Elizabethan theatre? I think it would be very interesting at Stratford, but that what we want in London is a theatre very close to it, perhaps combined with some features of the Greek theatre. With its ampitheatre this was the most perfect theatrical formula yet evolved. I imagine a semi-circle housing say 750 people, and a corresponding semi-circular front to the stage. It could be made in steps and behind you could have something like the facade of the Mermaid, with two entrances, one on each side, the centre opening and the upper stage. In that kind of compromise between the Greek and Elizabethan formulas I can see a stage that could house comfortably all the classic plays. Let us get outside the proscenium and come out into that no-man's-land where the actors and audiences are one.

REPERTORY ENTERPRISE

Some of the new plays given their first production in the provinces during the second quarter of 1953.

AMERSHAM Playhouse. *Open to Visitors*, a comedy by Henry Meredith and Nigel Sharpe. One set (upper room of Wentworth Castle, the grounds of which have been recently opened to visitors).

ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE. *Crime at Vera's*, by William Melvyn. 5 f., 4 m. Two sets. (Brayton Lodge and Beauty Parlour.)

BRIGHTON Pavilion. Brighton & Hove Repertory Co. *The Gift of Ko Feng*, a Chinese Fantasy by Joan Brampton.

FOLKESTONE, Leas Pavilion. Arthur Brough Players. *I Plead Guilty*, a murder story by Barry Phelps. 2 f., 7 m.

GLASGOW Citizen's Theatre. *The World's Wonder*, a Scottish Fantasy by Alexander Reid. 4 f., 13 m. Three sets.

Purple Dust, by Sean O'Casey. 3 f., 10 m. (Mr. Stoke and Mr. Poges restore an old Tudor Mansion in Eire and settle down there. The elements reduce their work to purple dust.)

GUILDFORD Repertory Company. *Week-end with Jenny*, by David Leslie. 4 f., 4 m. One set (cottage in Kent.)

Heavenly Bodies, by Anthony Moore. 3 f., 8 m. One set (lounge in American film-star's villa).

HARROGATE Grand Opera House. White Rose Players. *Job for the Boy*, a Lancashire comedy by Dennis Driscoll. 3 f., 4 m. One set (living room of working-class house in North of England).

HASTINGS, White Rock Pavilion. Rix Theatrical Productions. *Tell the Marines*, by Roland and Michael Pertwee. 1 f., 7 m. (German Gun Emplacement in Channel Islands during the last war.)

Strand Productions. *Janet Conway*, light romantic comedy by F. Ellinor Markham. 6 f., 3 m. One set (drawing room, Hampstead).

LANCASTER Grand Theatre. Castle Players. *Johnnie Was a Hero*, by Kenneth Hyde. 2 f., 5 m. Two sets (farmhouse and interior of disused Nissen hut).

Stop It Ada, by Archie Douglass. 4 f., 5 m. One set (lounge of country house).

LEICESTER. Saxon Players. *Sweet Sorrow*, by John Elder. 5 f., 4 m. One set (flat, Thames Embankment. Play covers twenty years in the lives of a group of people).

LIVERPOOL Repertory Company. *The Druid Circle*, by John van Druten. 5 f., 6 m. (Impact of sadistic professor on two students). First production in England.

LLANDUDNO Grand Theatre. *Can This Be Love?* by Armitage Owen. 3 f., 4 m. One set (lounge in North of England. Henpecked husband, etc.)

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE Playhouse. Donal Gilbert Repertory Company. *Red Wax*, a thriller by Archie Douglass. 4 f., 5 m. One set (lounge of hotel on Normandy coast where war loot under the floorboards; two murderers, a detective, a French chef and an elderly Englishwoman in the hotel).

NORTHAMPTON Repertory Players. *The Last Lamented*, farcical comedy by Hugh Bedford. 3 f., 4 m. One set (sitting-room, small country house. Widow contemplating third marriage tries to consult first husband in seance; second appears instead).

To Sup with the Devil, a play by Peter Albery. 3 f., 11 m. (Minister of Justice's room, Berger's House, Court of Justice in Russian-occupied Germany, Father Kessler's room, the Millers' home, Prison cell).

PERTH. *Account Rendered*. Play by William Bentley. 3 f., 4 m. One set.

RICHMOND (Surrey) Repertory Company. *The Moral Sex*, a farce by Aileen Burke and Leone Stewart. 3 f., 3 m. (Undertakers staying in small American town for their Annual Conference.)

So Shall Ye Reap, a Victorian thriller by Stuart Ready. 2 f., 3 m. (Housekeeper plans to murder miserly shopkeeper; salesman discovers plot and blackmails her.)

SHREWSBURY. Beacon Players. *The Gun'war*, by N. J. Fishlock. 5 f., 3 m. Two sets.

Not for Publication, a comedy by Edmund Warwick. 3 f., 2 m. One set (lounge of London flat).

SWANSEA. *A Woman or Two*, a play by Terence Dudley. 4 f., 3 m. One set (Sussex cottage).

WINDSOR Theatre Royal. *Spring Model*, a comedy by Alex Atkinson. 4 f., 6 m. Two sets. (Two sisters share Chelsea flat: one found acting as artist's model. Family reactions).

YORK Theatre Royal. *Stolen Waters*, a comedy by Lionel Brown. 4 f., 4 m. One set (Charles Scott, having renounced his Jewish ancestry, is left a fortune by his father on condition that he acknowledge his race.)

CORRESPONDENCE

Sir,

As one of the majority of members of the British Drama League who do not subscribe to the ritualistic practices of the Anglo-Roman Catholic Church, I beg leave to protest at the columns of **DRAMA** being used for propaganda in that respect.

Anne Ridler's article "Ritual and Drama" propounds the theory of Transubstantiation or Real Presence, and asserts that physical symbols tell us what we otherwise could not understand. It favours incantations and argues that "in liturgy our absorption can be complete." An overwhelming number of Church

men (and all Nonconformists) deny such theories, and generally regard them as sadistic.

Apart, however, from her highly debatable arguments concerning religion and life, your contributor goes much too far in her striving to link drama with certain religious observances. To suggest that ritual is the life-giving root of all drama is nonsense; just as it is untrue to say that our own drama specifically had its origins in the Mass. The distinguished critic, S. R. Littlewood, in *Dramatic Criticism*, maintains that "to say that the beginnings of drama are to be found exclusively in 'religious' observances is a palpable falsity." And, although Martin Browne in his excellent booklet *Beginnings of Drama* argues that the art of the theatre arose out of religion (a distinction with a difference) he never once mentions the Mass.

Mr. Littlewood adds: "The simple and obvious truth is that the theatre as a whole is a pagan institution . . . The Liturgy-born miracle play was only a contributory stream which happened to arrive before the recurrence of the classic repertory and its modern developments in the Renaissance. It was by no means the real or main source of modern drama."

But Anne Ridler is logical in one respect; and thus puts the seal of falsity upon her outburst. She condones irreverence and takes pride in quoting a play in which Cain addresses Almighty God as "Hi—who is that hob over the wall?" That what is generally regarded as irreverence goes hand in hand with ritualistic practice was proved to me recently when I heard a comedian on the stage making fun of Confirmation and the pranks the candidates got up to during the Service. The Reverend Fathers and the Catholic audience roared with laughter. When I tackled several of them about it, I got the reply that Confirmation and other rites were mere routine—part of daily life, "just like you catching the 8.50 train to Town."

I do not deny that ritual, in life and in drama, may have value and place, especially for the emotionally unbalanced. What I do deny is that it has a transcendental power. Ritual, which after all is nothing more than a man-made artifice and has little or no parallel with the wonderful simplicity of the Nazarene, too readily becomes a mere routine and a danger.

A routine religion is a sham; and so is a routine drama. I would rather have the crudeness of Naturalism (which Anne Ridler derides) than all the religious sensationalism she supports. The one is, at least, human. The other is a relic of savagery.

Yours,

JOHN BOURNE

Hoddesdon, Herts.

Published for the Religious Drama Society

PAST AND PRESENT

THREE SHORT PLAYS FOR
SMALL CASTS

3s. 9d. net

THE APPLE TREE

by B. M. CLEGG

(Suitable for Easter. 7 characters)

GIFTS IN A STABLE

by DAPHNE RANDS

(A Nativity Play. 8 characters)

SWORDS FOR THE INNOCENT

by BESS McARTHUR

(The setting of this play is a town in Egypt during our Lord's infancy. 5 characters.)

WHEREFORE THIS WASTE?

LESBIA SCOTT

3s. net

Here is a missionary play that has something to say and says it with sincerity and knowledge. The Bishop of an African diocese, spending his furlough in a lively English household, is searching for a priest to take back with him. Others have their own problems to solve and the conflict is developed with humour and insight.

3 acts. 12 characters.

NEW TESTAMENT MIMES

J. G. MARASH

4s. 6d.

This collection of mimes provides stimulating work for both children and teacher. The scenes are well planned and acted under the guidance of an experienced teacher they will impress with their dignity and simplicity.

(Published in conjunction with the
National Society)

S • P • C • K

Theatre Bookshelf

"Max" and his Fellows

AROUND THEATRES. By Max Beerbohm. Rupert Hart-Davis. 30s.

AS THEY APPEAR. By John Mason Brown. Hamish Hamilton. 12s. 6d.

THE THEATRE NOW. By Harold Hobson. Longmans. 15s.

Max Beerbohm began his twelve years as dramatic critic for the *Saturday Review* by frankly confessing that he could find "neither emotional nor intellectual pleasure in the drama." Many years later he wrote in the preface to the American edition of his collected criticisms that when he ceased to be a dramatic critic "my interest in theatres didn't survive my freedom for a single moment." What were the reasons for his lack of enjoyment in the theatre? Chiefly, I think, his inability to become part of an audience, to surrender himself to the mass emotion of a packed house. He remained aloof, painstakingly trying to discover what it was that provoked the enthusiasm of those around him. It puzzled him that anyone should prefer to write a play rather than a novel, for the drama has always seemed to him a narrow medium, hampered by "a thousand and one meticulousities of restriction and imposition." For what he calls "the successful mime" he has nothing but pity because he feels it must be "horribly tedious and galling for any person with an active mind to repeat nightly, for weeks and months, a certain series of words written by somebody else." He appears to resent the fact that in the art of acting the personality of the artist is more important than in any other art. "Great acting" he considers to have little to do with art, to be merely "a great egoistic farce." The plays which give him most pleasure are those which appeal more to the intellect than the emotions. The most appreciative and

penetrating criticisms in this book deal with Shaw, Ibsen, and the dramatists of the Vedrenne-Barker seasons at the Court. Because he has a fondness for plays which are whimsical, fantastic, and gracefully sentimental he overrates *Prunella* as "one of the most important of modern English plays" and describes *The Admirable Crichton* as "quite the best thing that has happened in my time to the English stage." But even when he is bored by a play and its players he is invariably good-tempered, witty, and entertaining, always finding something well worth writing about, even if sometimes it has little to do with the play he is reviewing.

For John Mason Brown playgoing is an engrossing adventure, his enthusiasm for the theatre is immense, he delights in praising but he has no patience with mediocrity. Unlike some of his colleagues, he is not taken in by the pretentiousness which afflicts so many American playwrights. Some of their much admired experiments in technique he finds perilously close to silliness. The genuine experimentalists of the American theatre, in his opinion, are the creators of the musicals who without talking about art have created a new form of theatre.

Mr. Hobson is a moralist as well as a critic. He convinces one that the theatre can powerfully combat the materialism and warped sense of values prevailing to-day. Rejecting the generally accepted theory that the theatre follows contemporary thought instead of leading it, he points out that the western theatre is, for example, ahead of its time in its growing concern with religion. This book is not just another collection of dramatic criticisms. It consists of five essays which provide an extremely valuable and clearly mapped survey of the theatre during the years from 1949 to 1952.

NORMAN MARSHALL

Living Rooms

THE OLIVIERs. By Felix Barker. Hamish Hamilton. 15s.

WITHOUT VEILS, *The Intimate Biography of Gladys Cooper*. By Sewell Stokes. Peter Davies. 15s.

CONQUEST: *The Story of a Theatre Family*. By Frances Fleetwood. W. H. Allen. 21s.

Little is harder than to write the biography of a living person, and especially of an actor or a politician. The result, in the words of Polly Eccles on love, is either "very like redcurrant jam—at the first taste, sweet, and afterwards shuddery," or else (in the day's curious fashion for bullfighting), a sanguinary work in which the subject is harried and goaded from preface to colophon. (Nobody then can accuse the author of partiality.)

For avoiding both of these extremes Mr. Felix Barker deserves our laurel. *The Olivier*s, conventionally treated, might have been dire. As it is, it turns out to be balanced and valuable. Mr. Barker, as a journalist, has done honour to his profession: here is a combination of accurate reporting and candid portraiture, a book that keeps moving and keeps developing. And how difficult that is all will know who have read a mass of lumpy, formless stage biographies. My favourite story is of Vivien Leigh's comment on Olivier's Macbeth in 1937 (an exciting performance): "You hear Macbeth's first line, then Larry's make-up comes on, then Banquo comes on, then Larry comes on." The book is a record of unsparing work matched by achievement: the Olivier's come on and on. We end the story feeling that they deserve the great position they hold in the theatre, and what more could anyone wish? (A last word: drama critics may read pp. 227-228 with apprehension.)

The biography of Miss Cooper is a more "chancy" business. Readers will either like it very much or find it exasperating. Its title is explained in

Miss Cooper's remark: "I'm not sure that I ought to forgive Noël Coward for telling me once that I was 'a woman without veils.' No woman likes to be told that she's without a shred of mystery—that nothing she says or does isn't a little unpredictable." The book does show its subject's independence, courage, charm; it presents another indomitably hard worker. Mr. Stokes has written with affection, but the result is a little untidy, a little self-conscious. One may be soothed by the frontispiece of Miss Cooper arriving at the theatre, and by Somerset Maugham's astringent preface. He ends (no astringency here) with the sentence: "Is there no young dramatist to write a play that will give her the opportunity to display her truly remarkable gifts?" This autumn Miss Cooper is to act in a new piece by Wynyard Browne; there is surely hope.

Without Veils and a third book, Frances Fleetwood's *Conquest*, are linked unexpectedly. When Miss Cooper returned to London in 1947 to act in Peter Ustinov's *The Indifferent Shepherd*, she appeared as the nagging wife of a clergyman played by Francis Lister. Mr. Lister, a "connoisseur's actor," as Miss Fleetwood calls him, was the last survivor on the stage of the famous Conquest family: George Conquest was called "the Nijinsky of pantomime." The family is traced through four generations. It is primarily a book for the stage historian in love with the old "minor theatres"; there is a good deal of vivid detail in the description of lost theatres and forgotten plays. I like one of the horrible puns that Miss Fleetwood has rescued from an old pantomime libretto of seventy years ago: "Take some magnesia, ma'am, nice cooling stuff." "I think I'm quite *magnesiafant* enough." The outline of the plot of a famous Surrey Theatre melodrama, *For Ever*, is almost worth the price of a book which has a full apparatus of appendices and index: nothing skimble-skamble here.

J. C. TREWIN

From the Great Days

SHAKESPEAREAN PLAYERS AND PERFORMANCES. By Arthur Colby Sprague. Harvard University Press. \$4.40.

"My thoughts turned to them—to Betterton and Garrick and the rest. Was it possible to imagine them as they really were?" How often have we all, we who are theatre-possessed, pondered this same question. We look back to the past and wonder how those distant legendary giants would have moved us. If someone whispered in our ears, "Would you care to meet a friend of mine who witnessed Kean's Othello, and hear about it?" we should drop everything and run to the interview hot with expectation, though with some fear that we shall be disappointed.

Professor Sprague has whispered in my ear before. When I first read his indispensable *Shakespeare and the Actors* I was bemused for weeks. It is a mine of exciting information of the first importance to producer and player. Therefore when I heard he had visited the same mine again, I was naturally impatient for the result. Now it is published, and I confess to gloating over the book.

This time our author has taken eight of the greatest players in our language, each in a supreme role, and provided the material for us to imagine them "as they really were." This material has been gathered from every possible contemporary source, a paragraph here, a line there; all is then pieced together like a mosaic until the portrait appears. If there is any sense of disappointment, it lies in the material itself, not in the way it is marshalled. Criticism is intensely personal; fashion, standard, and even language changes. It is given to very few eye-witnesses to capture a great artistic moment in a phrase that will carry into a later age the absolute conviction of truth. There are many quotations here that do achieve this miracle, and others one cannot quite believe. But this is a grand book and all I want is more.

LEO BAKER

THE NEW VARIORUM TROILUS AND CRESSIDA. Lippincott. £7.

THE SHAKESPEAREAN TEMPEST. By G. Wilson Knight. Methuen. 21s.

THE RESTORATION COMEDY OF WIT. By T. H. Fujimura. Cumberlege. 25s.

BEDLAM ON THE JACOBAN STAGE. By Robert Rentoul Reed, Jr. Cumberlege. 22s. 6d.

The New Variorum Edition of *Troilus and Cressida* is a prodigious achievement only made possible by devoted team work under able editorship, with financial grants from the University of Illinois, the American Philosophical Society and the Carnegie Corporation.

For general readers such as myself who, though Shakespeare lovers, have no claim to be experts it must surely be a boon, assembling as it does all or nearly all that has been written about the play for upwards of two centuries. Not that even the most hardy is likely to begin at page one and plod conscientiously through the next six hundred: my own intention was to flit here and there as fancy dictated, aided by the table of contents. But the conflicting opinions of bygone authorities proved so engrossing that a couple of hours slipped by in continuous reading. Let other note that, once taken up, the book is not easily laid down.

The same claim cannot be made for Mr. G. Wilson Knight's work, best taken in small doses. The word "Tempest" in its title, by the way, does not refer as might be supposed to Shakespeare's play of that name, but to a storm *motif* running through all his work, opposed by music. This, Mr. Knight contends in his Introduction, gives an imaginative unity hitherto not recognised; and he proceeds to elaborate the theory by quotation and commentary throughout the next three hundred pages.

Possibly owing to a blind spot in my mental make-up I often find him obscure, and get no help whatever from his esoteric Chart of Shakespeare's

Dramatic Universe; but the root idea seems reasonable enough that an author can be more readily identified by his general attitude to life than by any meticulous examination of texts for verbal idiosyncrasies, weak endings, metrical irregularities and the like. It comes as a shock, nevertheless, to read that "from careful study of the plays there will surely emerge a William Shakespeare as different from the smug mixture of platitudinizing moralist and beery yokel which is our conventional 'Bard of Avon' as any Lord Bacon or Edward de Vere might be from 'Shaksper'." Well, well, well!

To turn to Mr. Fujimura is to receive what some would consider a reviving douche of spring water, others the contents of the slop pail. His book sets out to prove that Restoration Comedy needs no defence against the charge of obscenity; that it is merely *naturalistic* (a favourite word of his) and that any attempt to treat it as mannered fantasy only tends to emasculate it. The idea is not altogether novel, though some of his conclusions are rather surprising. To translate, for instance, Dryden's definition of wit—propriety of thought clothed in propriety of words—into "natural thoughts naturally expressed" certainly seems to exalt Billingsgate unduly.

His main concern is with Etherege and Wycherley whom he regards as "Truewits" (in contradistinction to "Witwounds") tilting at false conventions, especially Christian morality. Congreve is rather grudgingly seeded third, though too warmhearted and moral to be a perfect Truewit. Moreover we are told that he had a sad fall from grace in *The Way of the World*, which is "too full of serious reflections and learned allusions, unrelieved by naturalistic touches and by skeptical and sexual wit."

Mr. Robert Rentoul Reed, Jr., author of *Bedlam on the Jacobean Stage*, is evidently no sharer of Mr. Fujimura's naturalistic views, judging by his condemnation of the Jailer's mad daughter

LAURENCE IRVING

Henry Irving

The Actor and his World

'Makes Irving live and die before our eyes.'—BEVERLEY BAXTER: *Evening Standard*. 'A full, considered life . . . a first-rate history and picture gallery of the English stage over half a century.'—IVOR BROWN: *Observer*. With 70 photographs and 21 drawings.

50s.

FABER & FABER

24 Russell Square WC1

WANTED

PLAYS WITH A PURPOSE

The Education Executive of the Co-operative Union Limited is willing to consider and purchase plays of social and co-operative significance, and a scheme has been devised to encourage authors to submit plays. Details of the scheme can be obtained from the

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
CO-OPERATIVE UNION LIMITED
STANFORD HALL
LOUGHBOROUGH

FRENCH'S

The House for Plays

Established 1830

LONDON TORONTO HOLLYWOOD SYDNEY NEW YORK



SOME RECENT ONE-ACT PLAYS

The price of each play is 1s. 6d. per copy (postage and packing 2d. extra)

Melodrama

- **HISS THE VILLAIN.** A. R. Taylor and W. Ernest Cossons. 5 m., 2 f., 2 Interior, 1 Exterior. Fee, 15s.

Comedy

INVITATION TO THE WALTZ. Philip Johnson. 2 m., 5 f., 1 Interior. Fee £1 1s.

MAYOR OF TORONTAL. Gwenyth Jones. 4 m., 5 f., 1 Interior. Fee £1 1s.

THE RENDEZ-VOUS. Vera Arlett and Elma Verity. 5 f., 1 Interior. Fee £1 1s.

THE SINGING MAID. Pentland Hick. 4 m., 4 f. Curtain Setting. Fee £1 1s.

Fantasy

BERNARD SHAW ARRIVES. James B. Fell. 3 m. Two Extras. 1 Set. Fee £1 1s.

Drama

CLOUDED CRYSTAL. Norman Holland. 6 f., 1 Interior. Fee £1 1s.

FINGER OF FATE. Terence Bowen. 5 f., 1 Interior. Fee £1 1s.

PERMANENT WAY. Anthony Booth. 5 m., 4 f., 1 Interior. Fee £1 1s.

THE RECCO. Falkland L. Cary. 2 m., 3 f., 1 Interior. Fee £1 1s.

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE CLINK. Neil Grant. 5 m., 2 f., 1 Interior. Fee £1 1s.

PLAYS LIGHT & SERIOUS

MISS MATTY SELLS TEA. Harold Simpson. 1 m., 6 f., 1 Interior. Fee £1 1s.

MISS NIGHTINGALE'S MISSION. Norman Holland. 7 f., 1 Interior. Fee £1 1s.

OUTCAST. Ronald Hadlington. 4 m., 2 f., 1 Interior. Fee £1 1s.

START OF A JOURNEY. Norman Holland. 6 f., 1 Interior. Fee £1 1s.

THE TESTIMONIAL. R. F. Delderfield. 2 m., 2 f., 1 Interior. Fee £1 1s.

WIDOW OF CHARLES DICKENS. Norman Holland. 6 f., 1 Interior. Fee £1 1s.

*Full Synopses of each of these plays will be found in The Guide to
Selecting Plays, (1953-4) now on sale price 2s. 6d.
(postage and packing 4d.)*

SAMUEL FRENCH LIMITED

26 Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2

Telephone: TEMple Bar 7513

Telegrams: DRAMALOGUE, RAND, LONDON

Cables: DRAMALOGUE, LONDON

in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. "Her mind, stripped of all rational restraint and guided only by animal instincts, takes a characteristically vulgar turn," is perhaps an odd way of putting it, but we know what he means. For the rest, though his industry is unassailable, it is a pity his style should be marred by what used to be called, rather insultingly, journalese. Periphrasis such as "distraught perpetrators of violence" is bad enough; but when we are told that by 1614 "plausibly delineated mad folk had, little by little, been shoved from the boards by melodramatically conceived automatons of violence," we can only echo Horatio's "These are but wild and whirling words, my lord."

C. A. C. DAVIS

The Open Stage

THE OPEN STAGE. By Richard Southern. Faber. 12s. 6d.

Richard Southern very properly bases his book on the open stage on the plea that what matters most in the staging of a play is not the scenery which decorates the acting platform, but the platform itself. Are we right in assuming that the existing theatre, with its picture-frame border, separating actors and audience, is the right medium for our national drama? The question is complicated by the fact that, although an important portion of our dramatic literature was written for the open stage, a numerically larger portion was not.

Those of us who have been concerned with producing Shakespeare are acutely aware of the injustice we do in squeezing him on to a stage for which he did not write and denying him the relationship with his audience which he requires. But if I were asked to produce on an open stage a season of Ibsen, Shaw, Rattigan and Sardou, I should be equally dissatisfied. The case for the open stage, however, is not confined to Shakespeare. There are a number of modern authors (Southern

mentions Eliot, Fry, Anouilh and Cocteau) who would undoubtedly benefit from the advantages of the open stage. This is proved by the successful staging of modern plays by John English's Arena Theatre and by experiments in American Universities.

The fact is that both the picture-frame and the open stages are limited in their suitability to interpret every kind of play. What is required is a theatre which incorporates both. *The Open Stage* touches on this question which will, I hope, merit the attention of future theatre architects.

HUGH HUNT

Long Plays

THE SEAGULL. By Anton Tchekhov. French. 4s. THE NOBLE SPANIARD. By W. Somerset Maugham. Evans. 5s. THE BACHELOR. By Ivan Turgenev adapted Miles Malleson. French. 5s. INTENT TO MURDER. By Leslie Sands. English Theatre Guild. 5s. SISTER CRAVEN. By Stuart Ready. Deane. 5s. BRIDE UNKNOWN. By Joan Brampton. Deane. 5s. ADAM'S APPLE. By N. C. Hunter. English Theatre Guild. 5s. THE NEST EGG. By Harold Brooke and Kay Bannerman. Evans. 5s. LIFE BEGINS AT FIFTY. By Armitage Owen. French. 4s. HAUL FOR THE SHORE. By Jean McConnell. Deane. 5s. ANYONE AT HOME. By Caswell Garth. Deane. 5s. MIDSUMMER DREAM IN THE WORKHOUSE. By Par Lagerkvist. Hodge. 5s. OUT OF THE WHIRLWIND. By Christopher Hassall. Heinemann. 6s. HIS EMINENCE OF ENGLAND. By Hugh Ross Williamson. Heinemann. 7s. 6d. LIKE STARS APPEARING. By Viscount Duncannon. Heinemann. 8s. 6d. THE BAIKIE CHARI-VARI. By James Bridie. Constable. 8s. 6d.

Presumably the point about acting editions (such as these under review) is that the text is filled out with complete acting directions. But according to whose production? Granted there was never yet a producer who did not want to impart special "touches" of his own, and granted, too, the question of style hardly arises in the case of the middle-class family comedy on which the

ENGLISH THEATRE GUILD

Plays now available for amateur production include three new releases:—

MANY HAPPY RETURNS. Comedy by Roland Pertwee and Noel Streatfeild. 7 f., 5 m., 1 set. 5/3.

INTENT TO MURDER. Murder-thriller by Leslie Sands. 3 m., 3 f., 1 set. 5/3.

ADAM'S APPLE. Comedy by N. C. Hunter (author of "Waters of the Moon"). 8 m., 3 f., 1 set. 5/3.

Also available:—

HARVEY, by Mary Chase. Comedy. 6 m., 6 f., 2 sets. 5/3

THE BIGGEST THIEF IN TOWN. Comedy by Dalton Trumbo. 2 f., 7 m., 1 set. 5/3

SLEEPING PARTNERSHIP. Comedy by Kenneth Horne. 4 m., 3 f., 1 set. 5/3

A LADY MISLAID. Comedy by Kenneth Horne. 3 m., 4 f., 1 set. 5/3

QUEEN ELIZABETH SLEPT HERE. Farcical comedy. 6 f., 7 m., 1 set. 5/3

THE PARAGON. Drama by Roland and Michael Pertwee. 5 m., 4 f., 1 set. 5/3

LADIES IN RETIREMENT. Thriller by Edward Percy and Reginald Denham. 1 m., 6 f., 1 set. 4/3

THE MAN WHO CAME TO DINNER. Comedy by Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman. 16 m., 9 f., 1 set. 4/3

LOVE IN ALBANIA. Comedy by Eric Linklater. 2 f., 3 m., 1 set. 4/3

STAFF DANCE. Comedy by Robert Morley. 5 f., 4 m., 1 set. 4/3

BLACK CHIFFON. Drama by Lesley Storm. 3 m., 4 f., 1 set. 5/3

AND THIS WAS ODD. (Originally entitled "Wasn't it Odd?") Comedy by Kenneth Horne. 3 m., 6 f., 1 set. 5/3

LAURA. Mystery thriller by Vera Caspary and George Sklar. 3 f., 5 m., 1 set. 5/3

TWO DOZEN RED ROSES. Comedy. Adapted from the Italian by Kenneth Horne. 2 f., 3 m., 1 set. 4/3

THE THIRD VISITOR. Comedy-thriller by Gerald Anstruther. 2 f., 6 m., 2 sets. 4/3

TO DREAM AGAIN. Romantic comedy. Ideal for Coronation year production. 2 f., 5 m., 2 sets. 4/3

ARSENIC AND OLD LACE. Comedy by Joseph Kesselring. 3 f., 11 m., 1 set. 5/3

PINK STRING AND SEALING WAX. By Roland Pertwee. 4 m., 3 f., 1 set. 5/3

THE SHOP AT SLY CORNER. Thriller by Edward Percy. 4 f., 6 m., 1 set. 5/3

BOLD LOVER. Comedy by Nicholas Phipps. 3 m., 5 f., 1 set. 4/3

NOW ON SALE

THE LOVE OF FOUR COLONELS, 6/10

By PETER USTINOV

WATERS OF THE MOON, 5/3

By N. C. HUNTER

and

RELUCTANT HEROES, 5/3

By COLIN NORRIS

Copies can be purchased but these plays are NOT yet available for performance.

ONE-ACT Plays include three new releases:—

SOMETHING IN THE ATTIC. By Molly Raynor. Comedy-thriller. 5 f.

BRIGHT SOCIETY. By Cherry Vooght. Comedy. 8 f.

MRS. TREDRUTHAN'S SON. By Arnold Ridley. Play for 6 f.

ALSO AVAILABLE:

DANGEROUS AFTERNOON. Thriller. 9 f.

WEDDING MORNING. Comedy. 8 f.

ELEVENSES. Play for 5 f.

THE TREE. Play for 7 f.

THE DESERT AIR. Drama for 6 f.

RING OUT WILD BELLS. . . Drama for 5 f.

FLOWERS FOR A LADY. Drama. 1 m., 3 f.

DUKE OF LIPARI. Drama. 2 m., 2 f.

Price for each ONE-ACT Play is 1/6 plus postage

COPIES OF ALL PLAYS SENT ON APPROVAL

Send for FULL CATALOGUE, 9d. post free, to:—

ENGLISH THEATRE GUILD LTD.

75 BERWICK STREET, LONDON, W.1 . Gerrard 3822/3

amateur repertoire seems to lean so heavily. But what happens when you come to *The Seagull*? What about those all-important half-pauses and semi-silences, those little jangling chords of atmosphere and all the other unwritten effects which in production may turn this tragic anecdote into something like a masterpiece? In French's edition there are helpful details of movements and grouping, but one must not imagine that simply by following these one will arrive at a production of this play, which can defeat the most talented professionals.

This warning is relevant to most acting editions, and it seems a pity that publishers should refuse to give them the *cachet* of the name of the producer involved. Perhaps Evans have done the next best thing, for their General Editor, Lionel Hale, has had the wit to preface Mr. Maugham's Edwardian trifle about a Spanish grandee in pursuit of an English widow in 1850 Boulogne, with a notice of the original production by A. B. Walkley, which tips the wink to any producer on what is essential here. And no doubt Mr. Malleon's adaptation from Turgenev has his own sanction as to details, just as the story of the fuddy-duddy civil servant in love with his ward carries the strong imprint of Mr. Malleon's own acting personality, and his charm that is half-flounder, half-bounder.

For a good, straightforward, surface-tension thriller that may well appeal to amateurs, there is Miss Sands's little piece about an authoress and a bank-robber and murder and lust and blackmail: melodrama of situation rather than character, which is safer for most amateurs than the other way round. Stuart Ready's "mystery play for women" is about a woman who returns from the grave to her former home, and it deals a number of strong, well-tried theatrical cards. And historical mystery is represented by Joan Brampton's drama, also all-women, which supposes (after a Charlotte Yonge novel) that Mary Queen of Scots had a secret

daughter by Bothwell and was reunited with her just before the execution.

Now for those comedies. N. C. Hunter's "Victorian fairy tale" about a country squire-turned-politician who bites on a magic apple, had a mild success on television. Harold Brooke and Kay Bannerman aim frantically at farce, with a pedantic young worm of a bank clerk who eventually turns, under the influence of drink and an obstreperous household. Armitage Owen's domestic humours are set suitably and inevitably in "a large, comfortable and rather old-fashioned house in the North of England," and when I add that its owner, Victoria Anson, "appears younger than her forty-nine years," the title may well be taken as self-explanatory. Jean McConnell plumps for Cornish comedy, amiably stocked with comic fishermen, vicars and local policemen; this also made its debut on television. Caswell Garth remains faithful to Hampstead, which has become stage comedy's most popular habitat these days, and if he is rather inexperienced at re-arranging his time-worn ingredients, the piece is at least salted with a certain amount of wit. I liked the domestic help who lives in council flats with "Central h., constant h.w., radio relay, TV aerial, day-nursery, communal laundry, games room for the old folks, and electricity on the all-in." After which she adds: "But they rush you 22s. 6d., mind."

Par Lagerkvist's Swedish play is less easy to categorise; a savage comedy of frustrated old men in the workhouse, with a middle act in which one of them lives the romantic dream that is his only consolation.

From the profane to the sacred: in a year that has appropriately seen a revival of church-inspired and church-acted drama, many will wish to have the texts of three notable productions in this vein, Hassall's Westminster Abbey play, Ross Williamson's play for Canterbury Festival, and Viscount Duncannon's study of Church and King in the thirteenth century, for the

**WHEN FUNDS ARE LOW
RESTORE YOUR FORTUNES
WITH
THE BRILLIANT NEW COMEDY
YOUR WORLD
AND MINE**

by **FRANK HARRIS**

"One of our most successful shows for years."

ALTRINCHAM GARRICK

"An evening full of laughs."

MANCHESTER EVENING NEWS

"Good comedy situations . . . high-spirited dialogue."

MANCHESTER GUARDIAN

"A good play, certainly good entertainment."

MICHAEL WALSH (Sunday Express)

"100% ENTERTAINMENT"

I SIMPLE INTERIOR

MODERN COSTUME

LOW FEES

5 m., 4 f. SPLENDID ACTING PARTS

All enquiries to sole agents:

MARGERY VOSPER LTD
32 SHAFTESBURY AVENUE, W.1

A CHRISTMAS PLAY

"BUT ONCE A YEAR"

(6 f., 4 m. One set. 4/3 post free)

Many thousands of amateur and professional performances.

"The most delicious forerunner of the Christmas season—bubbling with fun and wit." *Yorkshire Post*.

A POPULAR THRILLER

Completely Rewritten

"MURDER OUT OF TUNE"

(6 f., 3 m. One set. 3/6 post free)

"A slick thriller—first-rate theatre, modern and entertaining." *Northampton Independent*.

Falkland L. Cary

MESSRS. SAMUEL FRENCH LTD.
26 Southampton Street, Strand,
London, W.C.2

first performance of which Mr. John Christie has offered the Glyndebourne Opera House.

If these three are mainly concerned with God, James Bridie's last play deals with the Devil, and his appearance in a resort on the Clyde estuary. This was intended as a companion piece to *The Queen's Comedy*, and it defies brief summary. Suffice to say that the dictionary defines "charivari" as "hurly-burly," and that this last work shows Bridie's high, untidy talents at their hurliest and burliest.

PETER FORSTER

Mainly for Schools

SHORT PLAYS FOR LARGER CLASSES. By C. V. Burgess. London University Press. 2s. 6d. SEVEN PLAYS FOR BOYS. By Richard Parker. Methuen. 2s. 9d. SEVEN MODERN PLAYS FOR BOYS. By A. E. M. Baylis. Harrap. 6s. ANIMAL PLAYS. By Frank Carpenter. Methuen. 8s. 6d. MIME IN SCHOOLS AND CLUBS. By Grace Brown. Macdonald & Evans. 15s. FANNY BURNEY'S RESIGNATION. By Ruth Robinson. Macmillan. 1s. 8d.

These books have both faults and qualities in common, because they are all written to solve a particular problem that has arisen in their authors' experience, the problem of large classes, small rooms, difficult age groups, and acting parts for everyone. They are ingenious in overcoming physical obstacles, but they are not greatly concerned in stimulating the child's own imagination or creative instincts. Each play therefore is a technical exercise rather than a step in the child's dramatic development. Both in construction and dialogue these plays rank as sketches, with typed character and surprise endings to everyday situations. The animal plays are pre-occupied with revenge, a subject which however dramatic, seems odd in plays for children, until we note that the illustrations are by Ronald Searle who is an adept at making us shudder.

Teachers will be pleased to find all

the usual mime exercises and ballads graded for clubs and schools in Miss Brown's book. It is a painstaking and competent volume, but teachers should take it as a starting point rather than a finishing one, and go on to choose more original material.

Ruth Robinson's three Georgian plays are charming, and suitable for adults as well as the older child who has outgrown fantasy. There is here a sense of period and dignity in the dialogue and characterisation.

LYN OXENFORD

Stage Photography

PHOTOGRAPHING SHOWS. By Angus Wilson. Focal Press. 2s.

The photography of shows has become important and relatively simple during recent years. Important, for record and publicity purposes, and simple because of improvements in materials and apparatus. Concisely written and well illustrated by photographs and diagrams, this useful little book deals with the photography of plays, musicals, the pantomime, ballet and circus. Mr. Wilson has set out clearly and simply the essential requirements of technique and equipment which together can make a successful stage-photograph. He deals with grouping, camera viewpoints, backgrounds and also the important and sometimes delicate relationships between photographer, producer, stage staff and cast. The book does not lay down any stereotyped rules, and encourages what is surely paramount in theatrical matters—imagination.

This is a short and easily assimilated work, designed to help not only the keen amateur photographer, but also the drama-society member, who owns a fairly good camera, and who wishes to record permanently something of the characters, interpretation and atmosphere of each too fleeting production.

ROGER GILMOUR

Shorter Notices

Constable & Co. are reissuing the plays of Bernard Shaw, complete with preface, at 5s. each. Titles published so far include *Arms and the Man*, *Caesar and Cleopatra*, *Pygmalion*, and *Saint Joan*. To Everyman's Library (larger format) have been added a selection of six plays by Beaumont and Fletcher (price 7s.) and a volume of seven of the most famous of the Restoration Plays (6s.).

Spring, 1600, by Emlyn Williams and *Cavalcade* by Noel Coward have been reprinted by Heinemann's Drama Library, and A. K. McIlwraith has edited for the World's Classics Series *Five Stuart Tragedies* (price 7s. 6d.). Penguin No. 956 contains four English Tragedies of the 17th and 18th centuries by Marlowe, Heywood, Webster, and Dryden.

Samuel French have published acting editions of *The Hollow*, a play by Agatha Christie (6 m. 6 f., 1 set); *Red Letter Day*, a comedy by Andrew Rosenthal (4 m. 6 f., 1 set); *Dear Charles*, a comedy adapted by Alan Melville from the French (7 m. 5 f., 1 set); *Affairs of State*, "a light entertainment" by Louis Verneuil (4 m. 2 f., 1 set); *After My Fashion*, by Diana Morgan (2 m. 8 f., 1 set); *Figure of Fun*, a comedy by André Roussin, adapted by Arthur Macrae (5 m. 5 f., 1 set); and *Friendly Relations*, a comedy by James Liggat (3 m. 5 f., 1 set).

RAFFLE FOR A BEDSPREAD

A ONE-ACT PLAY FOR WOMEN

ONLY

G. B. STERN

Adapted from an incident in G. B. Stern's popular novel *The Donkey Shoe*, this lively and effective little play with an all-female cast is ideally suited to the needs of dramatic societies and Women's Institute drama groups.

1s. 9d.

METHUEN

THE ONE-ACT PLAY PROBLEM

by F. Sladen-Smith

IT is a year since an article of mine called "One-Act Plays Galore" appeared in *DRAMA*. Since then I have steadily read one-act plays, batch after batch, month after month. Not for a moment do I claim to have read most of the one-act plays published since last autumn; there must be many of which I have not even heard. But the immense output goes steadily on, and, on re-reading my article, I am astounded to find that there is so little fresh to say. The situation remains virtually the same. People are still writing and publishers are accepting a staggering amount of one-act plays; and how this can be considered a satisfying or a paying proposition remains a mystery. Many more festivals would be needed as well as groups who would confine themselves entirely to the one-act form if some of these plays are to have a chance at all. An observer from another land might conclude that the amateur players of Great Britain spent the whole of their time, from one year's end to another, in the production of one-act plays. Actually, this is not at all the case. Audiences, on the whole, much prefer the long play, and were it not for the festivals, the short play would have lost the importance it had some years ago.

Few new names have appeared during the year; the same popular authors are still writing the same popular plays—and, probably without exception, these authors are steadily over-writing. Their work is good; they well deserve their popularity; but their work would be better and stronger if they did not write so much, and I have little doubt that here they would agree with me. It is always a serious thing for an artist to be rushed into the turmoil of incessant work, and most of our best-known writers seem obsessed with the idea that they must turn out play after play, almost without stopping.

Making hay while the sun shines, no doubt—but is the sun shining so brightly? Or, will it shine the brighter for this reckless profusion? Overproduction can cause a slump.

The main reason why we have so many one-act plays thrust upon us is that there is still believed to be an excellent market for them; but there is another reason. They are, in general, easier to write than a long play. At once, I hear murmurs of strong disapproval. Obviously, to write a good one-act requires a flair for compression, concentration, and some sense of character, but unless a writer has this he has no business to attempt plays at all. The writing of a one-act play has its difficulties, but they are rarely as great as when a three or four-act play is tackled. Usually, one episode only is necessary, and, provided the ending is startling, amusing or in some way satisfactory, an audience is not disposed to ask questions. Despite all this, it is true that to write a memorable one-act play requires a particular type of genius. But, at the moment, we might as well leave genius alone. Genius breaks all rules; is the exception to all exceptions—with the result that if a work of genius appeared nowadays in the one-act market, it would have a sorrier time than usual. If, by some accident or inadvertence it achieved publication, many amateurs, in spite of the fact that the majority are by no means without taste or judgment, are now so used to competent mediocrity that they would be flummoxed by something completely new. However, the modern one-act play is not written under the compulsive force of genius; it is not written because someone has felt that they must create this play, come what may. It is written with the hope of earning an honest guinea or two—and, heaven knows, we all need that nowadays!

Mercifully, despite the rush, the feverish over-production, genuinely striking plays appear, and there are a number which, if not particularly striking, cannot be dismissed as negligible. But they are all too dominated by the competitive festival. Plays are advertised by the lists of awards they have gained, or by assurances that they are bound to receive awards in the future. A pleading voice can be heard saying "Do hurry up and try this play. It is bound to knock adjudicators flat"—more a pious hope than a reliable prophecy. But so important are these rewards made to appear that one can sense anxious writers trying to find out the secret of success. A play has won a cup in Scotland, a banner in Wales, and a butter-cooler in Devon, therefore it must be good. Now, in what way was it good? Why did it receive these glittering awards? So, rather in the manner of the Witches in *Macbeth*, the playwright proceeds to extract juicy details from this or that prize-winner, throwing them into his creative cauldron, until an inward voice says "Peace, the charm's wound up." It is to be hoped that once wound up the charm works. Sometimes it does. This is not to say there is much deliberate copying; there is very little, apart from the numerous Variations on a Cranford Theme. But most one-act plays can be classified into easily recognisable types, and each type owes its existence to some initial success.

My concern here is mainly with ordinary plays for mixed casts, but the vexed question of plays written for women is always with us. Fortunately, there are signs of improvement. Far more care and skill seem to be exercised nowadays, and the result is that there really are, at last, some satisfactory plays for an all-woman cast. On the other hand, extraordinary stuff is still turned out. It can be argued that it is written for a special market, but are the women in our villages and small towns so simple-minded that they require these imbecilities before they

can be induced to act? Some time ago I was lecturing to a large audience of women, and during question time I asked "Do you really like all these plays which are written especially for you?" The resounding "No!" not only shook the roof, but might have shaken various publishers, writers and those mysterious people who read for publishers, on whom, no doubt, depends more than we know.

It is impossible to see the situation remaining as it is; impossible to believe that this apparently endless succession of one-act plays can continue year after year, especially as, however good some of them may be, there are many in this vast output which are trivial, weak, and not serving the best interest of the amateur. There is bound to be a change although, possibly, time alone can bring that change. Time rarely solves, but perpetually alters a problem. How much has altered since that first Conference of the British Drama League on June 25th, 1920, which I remember so well. The amateur might adopt for one of his mottoes "Business during alterations." Anyway, the alterations go on, and perhaps the most significant will take place in the direction of the festivals and the one-act play.

F. SLADEN-SMITH

RECOMMENDED PLAYS

FOR MIXED CASTS

- BIRTHDAY MESSAGE. By Tyrone Guthrie. (5 m., 3 f.) Picture of a great man on his ninetieth birthday. Much the best in "Four One-Act Plays." Drama Library. Heinemann. 7s. 6d.
- OUTCAST. By Ronald Hadlington. (4 m., 2 f.) French. 1s. 6d. Judas spends thirty pieces of silver.
- THE RECCO. By Falkland L. Cary. (2 m., 3 f.) French. 1s. 6d. Unusual "flash-back."
- TIME'S A THIEF. By Frank Arthur (3 m., 2 f.) French. 1s. 6d. Revealing study of office life.
- THE MAYOR OF TORONTAL. By Gwenyth Hones. (4 m., 5 f.) French. 1s. 6d. Hypnotism in East-Central-Europe. Amusing.
- THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE CLINK. By Neil Grant. (5 m., 2 f.) French. 1s. 6d. Deserter meets a gang of crooks.
- BUTTONS. By Vera I. Arlett. (3 m., 3 f.) Deane. 1s. 6d. Concerning the Duke of Wellington.

AUTUMN SELECTIONS

FULL LENGTH (All One Set)

HAUL FOR THE SHORE (5m., 4w.)
A "T.V." Comedy success. Jean McConnell.

MERELY MURDER (5m., 3w.)
Thrilling Comedy by the authors of "Painted Sparrows" and "Love's a Luxury."

THE BUBBLE (5m., 2 w.)
An appealing Comedy. Leonard Irwin.

ANYONE AT HOME (3m., 6w.)
Light Comedy. Caswell Garth.

AN ANGEL CALLED JEREMY (3m., 4w.)
Comedy choice for good cast. Clement Anderson.

THE YOUNG IN HEART (5m., 5w.)
Play of considerable charm. Derek Benfield.

SISTER CRAVEN (10w.)
Interesting play of mystery. Stuart Ready.

BRIDE UNKNOWN (7w.)
Really "worthwhile" all-women play. Joan Brampton.

ONE ACT

THE PRATTLING PRENTICE (2m., 4w.)
Comedy. Norman Holland.

BUTTONS (3m., 3w.)
Costume Comedy. Vera Arlett.

IN THE MAZE (1m., 7w.)
Play. C. Neilson Gattay and Z. Bramley-Moore.

THE LAST VICTORY (4m., 5w.)
Period. Anne and Arthur Russell.

MORNING, NOON AND NIGHT (2m., 5w.)
Play. Edward Murch.

PAINT (3m., 4w.)
Comedy. Catherine Prynn.

COLUMBINE IN CAMBERWELL (4m., 2w.)
Play. Ivan Butler.

CANNON (4m., 3w.)
Youth Play. Victor Warner.

THE SMITHS (2m., 2w.)
Comedy. P. S. Laughlin.

RURAL BRITANNIA (1m., 3w.)
Comedy. Wendy de la Bere.

WHAT A SELL (9w.)
Comedy by author of "Mad Hatters in Mayfair."

VACANCIES (6w.)
A kindly play. Vera Arlett and Elma Verity.

ALL MY JULIETS (7w.)
Comedy. William Dinner and Morum.

JOANNA AND THE CANDLES (9w.)
Renaissance Play. Joyce Denny.

THE YOUNG QUEEN (6w.)
Costume Play. Norman Holland.

QUEENS' NIGHT (8w.)
Coronation Play. C. Neilson Gattay and Jordan Lawrence.

Plays are sent on Approval and a New Supplement to "Plays and their Plots" giving synopses, etc., of all New Plays is sent Free on Application.

"DEANE'S"

31 Museum Street, London, W.C.1

Tel.: MUSEum 3183. LAngham 7111.

THE SMITHS. By P. S. Laughlin. (2 m., 2 f.)
Deane. 1s. 6d. Whimsical comedy.

MORNING, NOON & NIGHT. By Anne and Arthur Russell. (2 m., 5 f.) Deane. 1s. 6d. A day on a village green.

THE BOY AND THE BALLERINA. By Michael Ingram. (1 m., 2 f.) Deane. 1s. 6d. Has atmosphere.

PANDORA'S BOX. By Archie R. Roy. (2 m., 2 f.) Deane. 1s. 6d. Grand Guignol.

COLUMBINE IN CAMBERWELL. By Ivan Butler. (4 m., 2 f.) Deane. 1s. 6d. Macabre and arresting.

THE PRATTLING PRENTICE. By Norman Holland. (3 m., 4 f.) Deane. 1s. 6d. Chaucerian frolic.

THE OLD LADY OF CHEADLE. By H. F. Delderfield. (1 m., 4 f.) Deane. 1s. 6d. Prince Charles on his way to Derby.

FLOWERS FOR A LADY. By Edward Percy and Lilian Denham. (1 m., 3 f.) English Theatre Guild. 1s. 6d. Sophisticated drama.

DESPERADO! By Leonard de Francoen. (9 m., 4 f.) Rylee. 2s. Brigands in a mountain village.

THE CALF BEFORE THE HEARSE. By Yves Cabrol. (4 m., 4 f.) Rylee. 2s. Gallic complications.

LORD ARTHUR SAVILE'S CRIME. Adapted from Oscar Wilde by A. K. Boyd. (6 m., 5 f.) Rylee. 2s. Ingeniously contrived.

SUNSHINE ON THE RIGHTHOUSES. By David Campion. (2 m., 1 f.) Rylee. 2s. Refugee comedy.

FOR ALL-WOMEN CASTS

BUT ONE HOUR MINE. By T. B. Morris. (9 f.) French. 1s. 6d. Characteristic historical study.

CLOUDED CRYSTAL. By Norman Holland. (6 f.) French. 1s. 6d. Crystal-gazing episode.

WIDOW OF CHARLES DICKENS. By Norman Holland. (6 f.) French. 1s. 6d. May surprise some Dickens' fans.

GIRDLE ROUND THE EARTH. By Margaret Love. (4 f.) Deane. 1s. 6d. Drama of record flight.

THE TRAP. By Kathleen Milne. (4 f.) Deane. 1s. 6d. Relentless realism.

ALL MY JULIETS. By William Dinner and William Morum. (7 f.) Deane. 1s. 6d. Novel and amusing situation.

SPINNING JENNY. By Mabel Facey. (6 f.) Rylee. 2s. The industrial revolution begins.

ELEMENT OF DOUBT. By Mabel Facey. (6 f.) Rylee. 2s. Adroit murder-mystery.

F. S.-S.

CORRECTION

In our Summer number *Cuckoo in Connemara* and *No Monument for Mark*, both three-act plays by Kate Lindsay (Stacey Publications) were wrongly attributed to Kate O'Brien and described as Irish comedies. Though the first is set in Ireland, three of the characters are English; the other play is set in an English country house and has no Irish characters. We offer our apologies to all concerned.

Members' Pages



The Director of the British Drama League gives news of the activities of the League and its Members

Conferences Past and Future

The London Conference and Theatre Week, 1953, was a success and drew together some 300 theatre-lovers from all over the world—India, China, and all the Dominions. For 1954 we undertake a new experiment. The date is transferred to the summer holiday season, in the hope that most of our younger members will be able to come; and a place has been chosen where accommodation at all prices is available. The place is Malvern, and the dates September 3-11. There will be visits to Stratford-on-Avon and other nearby professional theatres and a series of amateur shows in Malvern itself. Meetings will be in the Winter Garden Theatre, above the beautiful Priory Gardens and swimming pool. It is hoped to combine with the Week one of the League's main Summer Holiday Courses. The Standing Conference of Drama Associations is to meet during the final week-end, so that as many of its delegates as possible can share in our programme for the Week.

At Whitsuntide, there will be a Festival Week-end in London. The Final of the National Festival takes place on Whit-Monday night, June 7th, at the Scala. It will be preceded by two days of meetings and parties for organisers and players, including all the teams in the Final.

B.D.L. Theatregoers' Club

The League is forming a Theatregoers' Club at headquarters. All London members will be invited to join, and it is intended that provincial members shall be able to take part in a theatre-visit and the subsequent discussion whenever they are in London. It is planned as a gay affair, with the meeting at a restaurant for discussion over a meal. An announcement will be reaching members shortly.

Second Supplement

The Second Supplement to *The Player's Library* will be published at the beginning of 1954. The Carnegie U.K. Trust has again generously supported our work by making a special grant to cover half the cost of printing the Supplement, so that it is possible for us to receive subscriptions immediately. Members will shortly be getting an order form which they should fill in and return with the money, to secure their copy at half-rate. This Supplement will be twice as large as the first, bringing the Catalogue up to August, 1953.

Peter Ustinov Award

Mr. Peter Ustinov, President of the League of Dramatists, has given an Award of £25 to go to the member-society which produces the best new full-length play in the coming season. Details of this Festival can be found on our inside front cover.

A further opportunity is offered to playwrights by the Co-operative Union. (See page 41.)

International Holiday Plan

The first conference of the International Amateur Theatre Association took place at The Hague in June. One result was a plan by which any member of a club affiliated to a national federation (such as the B.D.L.) could be put into touch with members of the corresponding federation in a country to which he was going, either on holiday or to work, so that he would find like-minded friends and be able to see something of the amateur work in that country.

Edmund Cooper, the Overseas Drama Secretary at League Headquarters, would like to hear both from members who want to avail themselves of this suggestion, and also from those who would be willing to look after a foreign amateur coming to their district.

Festival Final

A Scottish win this year gave general satisfaction, and the Barrhead Players' Club, who gave such a lively performance of Agnes Adams' *The Masterful Wife*, are old hands, for this is their third post-war final. Runners-up were the Good Companions from Rochester in Scholem Asch's *Night*, and third the Southampton W.E.A. Student Players in Act I of *The Skin of our Teeth*. Barton-on-Humber and District Drama Club brought its very first entry into the Festival, *Willow Woe Is Me*, a skit on cricket by Dorothy Carr; and the Brecon Centre W.I. Drama Group presented *The Lonely Road*, another new play by T. C. Thomas who won one of last year's Original Play awards. This year's award went to Peter Preston for *Myself a Traitor*, presented in the Festival by the Rutland Gate Players of London, who received the Geoffrey Whitworth Cup. The Final was enlivened by the music of the Southall Light Orchestral Society.

Guests of Wales

The Welsh Area Final on May 16th at the Coliseum, Aberdare, was honoured by the presence of Mrs. Whitworth and Mr. Robin Whitworth. They received a very warm welcome from a packed house.

Mr. Robin Whitworth reminded the audience that the B.D.L. belonged not only to London but to the provinces as well. Before the adjudication of the plays in the Final, Mrs. Whitworth presented the Whitworth Cup to Mrs. Wallis, a vicar's wife from Llanfihangel Talyllyn, for the best unpublished play of Welsh life. The Cup has been presented to the Area by Mrs. Whitworth in memory of her husband, the late Mr. Geoffrey Whitworth, C.B.E. It was a most pleasing ceremony and one that was enjoyed by the large audience many of whom remembered and revered Mr. Whitworth.

The Wales Area Committee and the Welsh audience look forward to more visits from Mrs. Whitworth and her son.

R. D. WILLIAMS

Mary Kelly Memorial Fund

The Trustees wish to aid students who have some experience as producers or tutors of drama, and who wish to take up this work in the County of Devon, where Mary Kelly worked. Grants would be made for attendance at such courses as the B.D.L. Full-time Course, the Summer Courses of the League and other organisations. Students should aim at obtaining in due course such a qualification as Association of the Drama Board. These grants are not intended for those wishing to go to a dramatic academy, but for workers in the amateur theatre. Applications should be made to the County Drama Adviser, "Larkbeare," Topsham Road, Exeter.

B.D.L. Students' Association

Students at B.D.L. Courses have so often wanted to keep in touch with one another. Now some of them have "done something about it," and many others will surely want to join them. The Association they have just formed meets at Fitzroy Square once a month for discussion, play-reading or social evenings; it also organises theatre-parties, and will have a producing group attached to it. A bulletin is shortly to start publication. The Hon. Secretary is E. O. Parrott, 52 Howitt Road, N.W.3, and the subscription is 5s.

They Keep Your Records

To continue the introduction of members to their staff, we turn to the Membership Department. Luanne Woodbury has been secretary there for nearly three years. Formerly, she was with the Control Commission in Germany (1946/50) where she was in the legal division dealing with Four-Power work. She is assisted by Audrey Pattisson, a practising member of Player-Playwrights, who meet regularly in the Practice Theatre at Headquarters. Miss Pattisson, caught by the war in New Zealand, worked for two years in the library of the N.Z. Times Book Club. As soon as she was able to get back to England she joined the W.A.A.F.

Abingdon has a Gem

A year ago, Alan Kitching, Drama Adviser for Oxfordshire, asked the League's help with a project for a small theatre in an ancient building in Abingdon. Michael MacOwan spoke at a meeting which initiated the project, and here is the result:—

It is in the twelfth-century ruins of the Abbey of Abingdon in Berkshire that the

work has been done by the members of the Club, and the stage decorations are by some boys from Radley College. The theatre holds about 100 and true to tradition the cheap seats are in front and the more expensive on a raised platform at the back.

The opening play, *The Two Angry Women of Abingdon*, written in 1599 by Henry Porter, gent., was produced by Alan Kitching and admirably acted. I have



THE NEWEST ELIZABETHAN THEATRE : A performance at Abingdon.

latest amateur theatre is to be found. In this lovely setting the Unicorn Theatre Club have persuaded the civic authorities and the Friends of Abingdon to allow them to construct the most perfect little Elizabethan Theatre, with an apron stage. The

seldom enjoyed an evening so much and I think I must have seen more plays by amateurs than most people since I helped my husband to found the British Drama League in 1919.

PHYLLIS WHITWORTH

The Plays of Dan Sutherland

A letter from the producer of Boscombe's "St. George's Players."

3, Leighton Ave
Boscombe L
July 16th 1953

Dear Mr Sutherland,

Very many thanks for
your letter of the 10th inst & good
wishes for my forthcoming production
of "mist over the mistletoe".

I shall play it flat out for comedy
giving Auntie a whole full rein.
The play is just what I was
looking for. It offers scope for
fun at rehearsal (how different from
the pro. stage) & good entertainment
for audiences.

Sincerely yours

D. Rhodwell

All enquiries for Dan Sutherland's great new Christmas Play
"MIST OVER THE MISTLETOE" to

Samuel French Ltd.

26. Southampton St., Strand, London, W.C.2.

Here and There

Manchester, The Unnamed

During August the Unnamed Society held a comprehensive exhibition of stage designs made for the Society from 1915 to 1953 at the City Art Gallery, Peel Park, Salford. It was interesting to note the changes of style in stage decoration and costume which have occurred during the last thirty-eight years.

The exhibition was opened on Saturday, August 9, by the Director of Education for Salford, and remained open until August 30.

Leeds, The Kirkstall Players

We chose *Berkeley Square* for our twenty-first production. We are a small but very flourishing society. Though our hall is out of the centre of the town, and the seats are hard, we continue to attract larger and larger audiences. It is our boast that nobody who has once been has refused to come again. We used to play for one night only, but have now extended our run to four nights.

We are very handicapped back-stage. The acting area is small, the wings practically non-existent, and the ceiling is only eight feet above stage level. The scenery has to be painted direct on to the back wall to save every inch of space, and access from one side of the stage to the other is through both dressing rooms. We rarely attempt two sets unless one can be managed effectively with curtains.

BARBARA T. J. DALLEY

Wolverhampton

The Y.M.C.A. Premiere Players presented "for the first time on any stage" *Prelude to Poison*, a Victorian drama by F. Drake Nye. Our County Representative, Reginald Slater, writes that this is a very strong play with a good twist, and can be recommended to amateurs. Playing time is just over two hours; cast 2 f., 3 m., one set (living room of Crafton's Bank, 1890). The scenery was designed and executed by the Company.

Norwich, The Maddermarket



HAMLET, produced by Lionel Dunn, the new Director. A member of the B.D.L. staff took the name part.

Southern Rhodesia

Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother and Princess Margaret attended a Gala Matinee of the Centenary Pageant which Christopher Ede produced at Bulawayo this summer. A theatre holding 3,000 was specially built for the Pageant. "Bert", who supplied all the wigs and make-up used, lectured on make-up to about 500 representatives of amateur societies—proof of local enthusiasm for the movement.

Hillswick, Shetland

At long last we have started a Drama Club. Instead of only the four or five old faithfuls expected, ten people turned up on the first night to my huge astonishment. I did say that I'd go on with it only if they were willing to start from scratch. They were. So we commence with lip exercises, simple relaxing exercises, rhythmical movement, mime, etc. JENNIE GILBERTSON

Play Readings

by Clifford Stuart

WHEN play-readings first began no doubt the whole cast sat in a straight row and read the play through *in situ* with someone reading stage directions, and this simple and unadorned method is still sometimes followed. In contrast so much elaboration is sometimes introduced nowadays that what one sees is quite unrecognisable as a play-reading. Between these two extremes are varying forms of presentation which are more or less acceptable.

It seems hardly necessary to say that over-elaboration in presentation destroys the true character of a play-reading, yet some producers preoccupy themselves and their casts with movement, business, and even "props" at the expense of the things that really matter—interpretation, characterisation, pace and the finer points of dialogue. What inevitably results is neither a play-reading nor an acted play but a most unsatisfactory product with the readers often losing their places in the script or misreading. It is surely evident that with two or three rehearsals it is not possible to do more than produce a reasonably intelligent reading and to attempt anything further, except perhaps simple entrances and exits, is to jeopardise the success of the reading. I must admit that from the audience's point of view the *in situ* form of presentation is rather dull and inclined to make the play unreal (as, for instance, when an intense and intimate love-scene is read with the rest of the cast in full view!), and because I think it helps the audience to a better understanding and enjoyment of the play, while putting very little extra strain on the readers. I have almost invariably adopted a slight elaboration. Briefly my method is this:

When you, as producer, have thoroughly studied the play and made your notes for rehearsal, go through the play again for the mechanics of the reading. First, find out the greatest number of characters on the stage at any one time in each act to ascertain the number of chairs required for that act.

Servants (unless they have a prolonged scene) and characters making only a brief entrance can remain standing. Next, number each chair so that when a character enters all you need tell him is "Enter R (or L)" and, when you want him to sit, "Sit 3" meaning Chair No. 3. Lastly, follow the stage directions in the script as to entrances and exits but a little juggling may be necessary to avoid untidiness. Use no "props" and introduce only simple and essential "noises off."

The important remaining matter is compering, which is best done by the producer. Cut out all spoken stage directions except where they point to happenings in the play which would not otherwise be understood by the audience. The introduction to each act should be shorn of unnecessary details and usually confined to period, time, place and so on. Some plays may need fuller introduction, conveying the atmosphere of the scene, to enable the audience to listen with full enjoyment. If you possess curtains part them immediately on completion of your introduction to each act and close at the conclusion of each act. In the absence of curtains indicate the end of each act by a brief black-out. Announce name of play, author and cast at the outset and at the end of the reading the cast should make its bow to the applauding audience, a formality not always observed.

Another method of presentation involves nothing more, apart from compering, than having the whole cast on the stage and when a character is "on" he stands and when "off" he is seated. A simple, tidy and quite effective method and has much to commend it.

Yet another method is to read the play behind curtains or screens. This approximates to a broadcast and is effective and exciting for murder plays, especially if the hall lights are dimmed, but rather pointless for other types of play. Not much favoured by audiences who prefer to see the readers.

As to the all-important subject of play

selection, the more a play depends on visual appreciation the less successful will it be for reading, for the readers can only act with their voices and faces. It follows, therefore, that plays with much stage action and movement (in particular, farces) do not read well. Conversely, the best plays for reading are those which rely almost entirely on dialogue for effect and interest. This matter has not always had the careful study it deserves by those responsible for choosing plays for reading.

It is surprising that comparatively few dramatic groups include play-readings in their programmes. In charge of competent producers they can be of great value for much useful knowledge may be acquired by the less experienced as regards clarity of speech, the value and significance of the dramatic pause and the smart picking up of cues, to mention but a few points. Surely fine training for the more exacting fully-acted play. Play-readings are easy to organise and provide, at small cost, most enjoyable club evenings for readers and listeners alike.

Practical Advice

We are sometimes asked why we do not print much practical advice for amateurs in this magazine. It would be redundant, for members have already available to them the combined help of the Library and the Advisory Service. The largest collection of practical books on the theatre is here to be borrowed from, and the staff in all departments is ready to answer letters, to suggest books and to explain how to use them. Readers who are not members can get all this help by joining the League.

ONE-ACTS FOR CORONATION YEAR

Boy of Bisleigh, The	(5 m., 2 w.)
Check to the Queen	(5 w.)
Farewell, Lochleven!	(6 w.)
Here Comes a Candle	(5 w.)
Our Hour Alone	(5 w.)
Queen's Token	(6 w.)
Room for Harmony	(2 m., 6 w.)
Stratford Tapestry	(1 m., 4 w.)

Catalogue 6d. from

THE INTERNATIONAL ONE-ACT PLAY THEATRE

60 EARLSFIELD ROAD, LONDON, S.W.18

Ready Shortly

THE HOPEFUL TRAVELLERS

A Flemish comedy in three acts
by G.-M. Martens

adapted by Andre Obey

and translated by Iris Capell

Cloth, 7s. 6d.; Paper, 5s. net

Suitable for the Christmas season

RAB THE RHYMER

A play on the life of Robert Burns
in three acts with ballads

by Eric Crozier

Paper, 5s. net

J. GARNET MILLER LTD

30 Batchworth Lane, Northwood, Mddx.

distributed by

QUALITY PRESS LTD

Bouverie House, 154 Fleet Street,
London, E.C.4

THE IDEAL CHRISTMAS GIFT

TO REPERTORY AND AMATEUR COMPANIES

"A (K)NIGHT AT KING ARTHUR'S COURT"

Performed at Playhouse, Newcastle, 1952

A New farcical Comedy especially written for the
Festive Season by IVOR DEAN

11 Males. 6 Females. 1 Set

A NEW VERSION OF THE FAMOUS MELODRAMA

"MARIA MARTIN"

or "THE MURDER IN THE RED BARN"

Performed by Amateurs and Professionals

in all parts of the country.

Written in the form of a Victorian evening at a
Music Hall with its celebrated Chairman.

9 Males. 3 Females (ALL-FEMALE cast possible)

Enquiries for both plays to:

MARGERY VOSPER LTD., 32 Shaftesbury Avenue, W.1

"THE ELEVENTH HOUR"

3-Act Comedy Thriller 3 w., 5 m.

"Brimful of excitement, action, and suspense.

I just could not read it quickly enough."

JOHN ALLEN in DRAMA.

"IN THE MAZE"

1-Act Comedy about 7 w. and 1 m. lost in a Maze.

Both by Neilson Gattley and Z. Bramley-Moore.

Copies on approval from "DEANE'S."

31 Museum Street, London, W.C.1.

"WHO OWNS TOWZER?"

1-Act Comedy about a "lost dog." 5 w., 2 m.

Script on loan—Neilson Gattley

78 North Side, London, S.W.4

for 6d. stamps

Now released for Amateurs

"MERELY MURDER"

by Guy Paxton & Edward V. Hoile

5 m., 3 w., 1 set

A Comedy with Thrills

Same Authors as

"LOVE'S A LUXURY" & "PAINTED SPARROWS"

Published by H. F. W. DEANE & SONS 5/-

EVANS PLAYS

Never before made available to amateurs:—

THE MAN IN GREY

arr. Charles and Toy

Famous as play, novel and film, *The Man in Grey* goes back to a scene in Grosvenor Square in the early nineteenth century. The play has never before been released for amateur performance and provides most striking parts for 4 m. and 3 f., also 1 black page who can be either boy or girl. One set. 5/-.

A new play by a famous novelist:—

JINNY MORGAN

Howard Spring

A moving and human drama set in a Welsh mining community. Catastrophe befalls the village and Jinny, with all the courage and fortitude of her Welsh countrymen, emerges triumphant. One simple set. 5 m., 4 f. 5/-.

Postage on single copies of any of the above, 4d. extra.

EVANS BROTHERS LIMITED

MONTAGUE HOUSE RUSSELL SQUARE LONDON W.C.1

Telegrams: BYRONITIC WESTCENT, LONDON Telephone: MUSEUM 8521

Plays by Wilfred Massey

THREE ACTS EACH WITH SINGLE INTERIOR SCENE



5 men, 5 women. The celebrated Comedy-Mystery Success. Approaching 4,000 performances. "The plot is full of surprises and ludicrous situations, with a novel and quite unexpected twist at the end." "Every thrill associated with the works of the late Edgar Wallace, with a romantically humorous touch of the author's own."



3 men, 6 women. "Charming comedy with the ever-green Cinderella story." Professional productions at King's Theatre, Gainsborough; Empire, Peterborough; Palace, Westcliffe-on-Sea; Pier Theatre, Hastings; Pavilion, Bexhill; Hippodrome, Stockton-on-Tees; Theatre Royal, Leeds; Hippodrome, Keighley; Theatre Royal, Leicester; Hippodrome, Bolton, etc.



4 men, 6 women. The popular comedy-farce. "This is a non-stop laughter show without any question." "Wholesome family fun, without calling for an extensive range of scenery." "A refreshing change to have a clean farce." "There are no unrewarding parts and the action is lively and laughable all the way through."



4 men, 5 women. Thriller-play. Broadcast over Australian commercial network. "A tense and at times moving play, with legitimate comedy relief." "Never failed to hold the audience's attention." "The story of John Marlow's dilemma mounts in interest and suspense." From a professional producer: "I consider this the ideal repertory vehicle."



3 men, 6 women (or can be played with 4 men, 5 women). Comedy with thrills. "The lively plot twists and turns in non-stop laughs and action." "The play is easy to stage and rich in characterisation." "An ordinary, even perhaps dull, household—until the fireworks start." "Every part offers opportunities for acting skill."

OVER 15,000 PERFORMANCES IN BRITISH ISLES,
AUSTRALIA, U.S.A., CANADA, SOUTH AFRICA, ETC.
READY SHORTLY.—"LEAP IN THE DARK." A new comedy-thriller
in three acts, single interior scene, 4 men, 7 women.

Wilfred Massey
9, Westfield Road, Beaconsfield. (Bucks)

EVANS PLAYS

Published for the first time and now available to amateurs:—

THE NOBLE SPANIARD

W. Somerset Maugham

The touch of the master craftsman is apparent throughout this delightful, elegant comedy from the French, carried to an honourable conclusion with dialogue as light and crisp as the emotions of the characters themselves and with humour as dry as only the author's salt wit can make it. One set, 4 m., 5 f. 5/-.

WE MUST KILL TONI

Ian Stuart Black

Elegant comedy thriller from the Q Theatre, and an immediate success on radio and television. A play which is continuously alive with wit and invention. 3 m., 2 f. One set. 5/-.

BEGGAR MY NEIGHBOUR

Arnold Ridley

The well-known author of *The Ghost Train*, *Easy Money*, etc. scores another success with this witty and genial topical comedy. The parts: young husbands and wives, bossy widows, a mixed bag of neighbours, "all are made for actors". One set, 4 m., 4 f. 5/-.

Postage on single copies of the above, 4d. extra

EVANS BROTHERS LIMITED

MONTAGUE HOUSE, RUSSELL SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.1

Telegrams: BYRONITIC WESTCENT, LONDON Telephone: MUSEUM 8521

KATE LINDSAY

NO MONUMENT FOR MARK

Comedy. 3 acts, 1 set, 4w., 4m.

Core is a strong well-constructed story, with firm characterisations and sparing dialogue.

—"The Stage."

Set—country-house study of a sophisticated author.

CUCKOO IN CONNEMARA

Comedy. 3 acts, 1 set, 5w., 5m.

Magical atmosphere of the Emerald Isle is captured . . . a winner.

—"The Stage."

Set—lounge hall of an Irish inn.

THE LISTENING HILLS

Play. 3 acts, 1 set, 3w., 6m.

I can strongly recommend this play to any producer on the lookout for "something different."

—An amateur producer.

Play Competition Prizewinner.

Set—living room of moorland farmhouse.

Professional productions include Bolton, Barnstaple, Gainsborough, Blackpool, Preston, Scarborough, Colwyn Bay, Harrogate, Dewsbury.

Fees: 3 guineas. Acting Editions: 4s. each (plus 2d. postage). Reading copies 3d. each.

STACEY PUBLICATIONS

57 Church Hill, London, N.21

A New Three-Act Drama for a cast of Nine Women

"THE OWNER OF REDFIELDS"

by Roy Findon (One Set)

A Drama in Three Acts

"PITFALL"

(One set, 5 f., 3 m.)

A runner-up in the Amateur Stage Competition

"Interesting thriller with unusual ending."

Reading copies either play on application with 1/- (each) in stamps to Box 562, DRAMA, 9 Fitzroy Square, London, W.1.

SMALL ADVERTISEMENTS

(Rate 6d. word. Minimum 20 words)

THE TOWER THEATRE, CANONBURY—home of the famous Tavistock Repertory Company—will reopen for public performances on October 16. Details of the 13 productions, dates, classes of membership and facilities at Canonbury Tower available on request. Vacancies for experienced actors, stage management, and other personnel. Write Tavistock Rep., Canonbury Place, Islington, N.1.

COMEDY OR TRAGEDY, you still need costumes, and we suggest you write to **AJAX**, 44 Wilkinsons Street, S.W.8.

STAGE CURTAINS for hire. 22 Orford Road, Walthamstow. Keystone 1598.

DRAMATIC SOCIETIES, Managements or Author can stage productions or try-outs at Irving Theatre, Dring Street, Leicester Square, London. WH1tehall 3678.

JOHN SUMMERS, PRODUCER AND LECTURER, has limited vacancies for productions with amateur companies in London area. **GROUP COACHING** for Festivals. Phone ENT. 4011.

ROSEMARY FOR A QUEEN. Gloucestershire County Winner in B.D.L. One-Act Play Festival 1952 (26 entries). Recent Cup Winner West Suffolk Festival at Bury St. Edmund's (17 entries). Tudor Costume play for six women. (Suitable, but not essentially a Coronation Year play.) For copy on approval and further particulars apply Kathleen Bower, 3 Abbots Road, Cinderford, Glos.

WELL-ESTABLISHED SPEECH & DRAMA SCHOOL for sale (includes property); a flourishing and pleasant connection. Box 513.

JUVENILE COSTUMES FOR SALE. Unique wardrobe fit ages 5-17 years. Period, Fairy Tale, Animals, etc. Can be sold in "lots." Also Hampers, Dress Stands. View, near London. Quick sale benefits children's charity. For catalogue and details write Miss Milliken, 31A Clarendon Villas, Hove, Sussex.

LARGE POLLAK TOY THEATRE for sale, complete lighting set, curtains, wirelides, crate. Write Miss Milliken, 31A Clarendon Villas, Hove, Sussex.

LONDON'S LITTLE THEATRE COMPANY has vacancies for personnel for season commencing October (auditions from mid-August). Hon. Actors, Designers, Stage and Administrative staff are invited to apply for membership.—Tavistock Repertory Company, "The Tower Theatre," Canonbury Place, Islington, N.1.

FOR SALE—SIX 1,000 WATT SPOTS. Spot Bar and six-way Dinner Board, £80; also Panatrophe, Speaker, and Microphone, £35.—Box 514.

YOUNG ACTORS GROUP, Wallington, has vacancies students 15-18 years. Tuition Theatrical Art. Fees moderate. Details—98, Onslow Gardens. Classes Sutton/Croydon bus route.

HUNTINGTON HOUSE SCHOOL

(Incorporating THE TUDOR ACADEMY OF ARTS)
HINDHEAD, SURREY Tel. 495

Principal: MISS E. R. LIDWELL

"HUNTINGTON" occupies one of the finest positions in the country with 40 acres of grounds, excellent playing fields, usual games.

The general aim of the School is to give a wide and sound education. The Seniors are prepared for the Oxford General Certificate of Education at all levels and University Entrance if desired. There are special facilities for Languages. The School is also ideal as a Junior Residential Academy of Dramatic Art and Dancing. Comprehensive Training is given for girls from 8 to 18 years in all branches of Drama and Stage Technique, Verse Speaking, Singing, Ballet and Fencing. All recognised Examinations. Illustrated prospectus from the Secretary.

FULL-LENGTH PLAY

PAINTED LADIES

By H. G. MACLAURIN

3 Men, 7 Women, 1 set

This is a delightful Comedy, which will be enjoyed both by Actors and Audience. Ten good Acting Parts; Dramatic Situations; Plenty of Comedy; Exciting Climax; First-class Evening's Entertainment. The Play Amateur Societies are looking for. Performances of Plays by this Author now exceed 600.

Copies on Approval.

Apply the Secretary.

YORKSHIRE PLAY BUREAU

Registered Office:

20 BANK STREET, SHEFFIELD, 1

ONE-ACT PLAYS

by Dr. LILIANE CLOPET

THE LONG NIGHT. An emotional drama of the times.

THE CRYPT. Brilliant Cupwinner.

JULIE DESTIN. Thrilling, colourful.

All the above for 5 w., 2 m. 1s. 8d. post paid.

THE BROWN TEAPOT. Cottage drama for

4 w. 1s. 8d. post paid.

NEEDLES AND PINS. For 7 w. 1s. 8d. post paid

THREE PLAYS FOR CHILDREN. In one

volume, with diagrams. 2s. 2d. post paid.

DICKORY DOCK. Gripping drama for 4 w., 1 m.

1s. 8d. post paid

Copies from the Publisher,

LARKS RISE, ST. MELLONS, CARDIFF

LEONARD'S PLAYS

Catalogue of

PLAYS FOR FESTIVALS

ALL-WOMEN

MIXED CAST

One-Act and Full Length, and Sketches, Mono-Duologues, etc., for Concert Parties

From: Dept. LE/DL,

123 Heydrop Street, Southfields,
London, S.W.18

NEW "DEANE" COMEDY

THE BUBBLE

By Leonard Irwin. Full Length

One Set. 5 m., 2 w.

"Very funny and interest well sustained . . . warm human stuff . . . will be a favourite with amateur groups and deservedly so."—*Manchester Guardian*.

"A lively entertaining play . . . understanding and sureness of touch . . . delightful and plentiful humour."—*Evening News*.

Popular in Repertory

Copies sent on Approval.

H. F. W. DEANE & SONS LTD.

31 MUSEUM STREET, LONDON, W.C.1

OXFORD THEATRE SCHOOL

Comprehensive stage training. Fully qualified staff and professional producers.
Preparation for recognised Acting Certificate.
Opportunities of appearing in professional productions.

Information from—The Secretary
28 Wellington Square
OXFORD

The New Era Academy of Drama and Music

17 CAVENDISH SQUARE, W.1 (London) Ltd Telephone: Langham 1320

Patrons: Maurice Codner, R.P.S.; Frank O. Salisbury, C.V.O., LL.D., B.I., R.P.S.;
Augustus John, O.M.; Flora Robson, C.B.E.; Dame Sybil Thorndike, D.B.E., HON.L.L.D.;
Claire Luce; D. G. E. Hall, M.A., D.LITT.

STAGE TRAINING COURSE—Evening Classes
INDIVIDUAL STAGE TRAINING—Private Lessons
VOICE PRODUCTION—Private Lessons
PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS IN SPEECH AND DRAMA (Bronze, Silver and Gold Medal awards)
(held in London and in 60 Provincial Centres)

★
Second Edition

Practical Make-up for the Stage

By T. W. Bamford. With a Foreword by Ernest Thesiger. An up-to-date Second Edition of this valuable textbook on the art of painting the face for the stage. Illustrated throughout with numerous detailed photographs. 15/- net.

"A thoroughly comprehensive and intelligent guide to the subject."

—THEATRE WORLD

Pitman

PARKER ST. · KINGSWAY · LONDON, W.C.2

"It is very obvious that Mr. T. Bamford, secretary of the National Operatic and Dramatic Association, is a man who takes the theatre and everything connected with it in a very serious light and rightly regards it as a world in which the inhabitants must learn their work thoroughly and not be content to take short cuts and skimp even the slightest detail. . . . There are very many types of make-ups, straight juvenile to almost every type of character, explained fully—in short, it is a book that every artiste should possess."

PERFORMER

THE ROYAL SCOTTISH ACADEMY OF MUSIC COLLEGE OF DRAMATIC ART

(Recognised by the Scottish Education Department as a
Central Institution)

Patron:

HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH, THE QUEEN MOTHER

Director of College:

COLIN CHANDLER

Full-Time Professional & Teachers' Course

The curriculum includes classes in: Acting, Production, Voice Production, Diction, Phonetics, Verse and Choral Speaking, Mime, Improvisation, Fencing, Dancing, Singing, Broadcasting, Make-up, Stage Management, Scenic Design and Construction, Property-making, etc.

The University of Glasgow provides a special course for students of the College which includes lectures on Poetics, Dramatic Theory and the History of Drama and Theatrical Representation.

The Citizens' Theatre gives valuable professional help. Teacher students are given opportunities of teaching under supervision in their Third Year. On the satisfactory conclusion of this course, students may be presented for the following awards:—

DIPLOMA in DRAMATIC ART

DIPLOMA in SPEECH and DRAMA

CERTIFICATE in DRAMATIC STUDIES

(awarded by the University)

The Session consists of three terms, each of 12 weeks.

Enrolments are now being taken for the Session commencing in September, 1953. Prospectus and particulars from John B. Morrison, Secretary, St. George's Place, Glasgow, C.2.

P. A. R. A. D. A.

(Preparatory Academy for the Royal
Academy of Dramatic Art)

Principal: ERIC CAPON, M.A.

- 1. Trains full-time students in all branches of dramatic art.
- 2. Has a school for children aged 13-16 where general education to G.C.E. level is combined with dramatic training.
- 3. Can offer part-time training and evening classes in acting, voice-training and production.

Apply to:

The Secretary,
55 Shepherd's Hill, Highgate, N.6
MOUNTVIEW 4804

CENTRAL SCHOOL of SPEECH AND DRAMA

(The Central School of Speech Training
& Dramatic Art, Inc.)

ROYAL ALBERT HALL, LONDON,
S.W.7

Recognised by the Ministry of Education

EVENING COURSE

in association with

THE BRITISH DRAMA LEAGUE

"The Art of the Playwright"

by

STEPHEN JOSEPH, M.A., M.F.A. (Iowa)

BEGINNING 6th OCTOBER, 1953

For details of this course and prospectus
of general courses apply to the Registrar

THE ART OF MOVEMENT STUDIO

Director: Lisa Ullmann, F.L.G.

Recognised by the Ministry of Education

(Formerly of Manchester)

Now at:

WOBURN HILL, ADDLESTONE
NR. WEYBRIDGE, SURREY

(35 mins. by train from Waterloo)

Courses in Dance and Dramatic Movement, including Classes in Mime, Stage Gesture, and Deportment for Actors and Singers.

Private tuition by appointment.

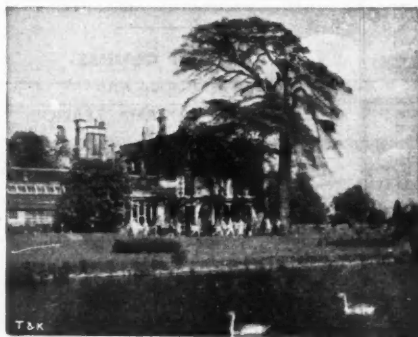
Special week-end courses in London.

For further details apply to the Secretary

THE ROSE BRUFORD TRAINING COLLEGE OF SPEECH AND DRAMA

(Diploma accepted by the Ministry of Education for Qualified Teacher Status)

The College offers training for both teaching and the Stage. Tuition is given by a staff of Specialists and includes much practical work in costume and property making, stage-management, lighting, etc., and also instruction in Radio work. There is a well-equipped Barn Theatre in the park grounds.



LAMORBEY PARK - SIDCUP - KENT
(Twenty-seven minutes by train from London)

Three-Year Specialist Teachers' Course

including

Stage Course

★

One-Year Course for Qualified Teachers

(Students eligible for Grant Aid)

Three Scholarships are offered.

Students accepted from 17 yrs. of age

Coaching for L.R.A.M. and
A.D.B. examinations.

Write for Prospectus

THE LONDON ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND DRAMATIC ART

Established 1861

L. A. M. D. A.
TOWER HOUSE
CROMWELL ROAD, S.W.5
(Fremantle 9883)

Chairman:

VERNON GATTIE, M.A., C.B.E.

Principal:

MATTHEW FORSYTH

**Full Dramatic Course with Speech Training and including
Television and Film Classes**

**Regular Rehearsal Classes and End of Term performances under Professional
Theatre Conditions in the L.A.M.D.A. Theatre**

Recent Student Productions:

July, 1952: "THE HIPPOLYTUS"

March, 1953: "THE FIRSTCOMERS"

Dec., 1952: "MY GOOD BROWN"

L.A.M.D.A. REVUE 1953

"THE HIPPOLYTUS."—"Reports on student performances are apt to be suspect if they stray on the side of enthusiasm and it is essential that they should be presented with due regard to a sense of proportion. But even with such mental checks applied, this 'Hippolytus' leaves the impression of outstanding merit. The speaking is universally beautiful, the rise and fall of the words, the tension in the silence of the pauses gain full value from Gilbert Murray's translation."—The Stage.

PROSPECTUS SENT ON REQUEST

FREMANTLE 9883

Incorporated as a "Limited" Association for the Promotion of Art and not for Profit

NR

staff
age-
ped

t

r

d)
red.
age
and

RT

onal

le of
even
king
rom

profit

G
of

v

7
Spe
ien
clay
Mi
on

Ye
the
wh
its

Se

d
n
g
n

t

Corporation of London



THE GUILDHALL SCHOOL of MUSIC and DRAMA

(Founded in 1880 by the Corporation of London)

VICTORIA EMBANKMENT, LONDON, E.C.4

PRINCIPAL:

EDRIC CUNDELL, C.B.E., HON. R.A.M., F.G.S.M.

**FULL-TIME EDUCATION IN MUSIC
OR DRAMATIC ART OR PART-TIME
TUITION IN SINGLE SUBJECTS**

Training is given in Dramatic Art, Speech, Public Speaking and all Musical Subjects. In addition to private lessons, which form the basis of instruction, there are classes for Mime and Movement, Verse Speaking, Microphone Technique, etc. The School remains open in the evening for those requiring part-time tuition.

The Ministry of Education acknowledges the Three Years' Speech and Drama Teachers' Course leading to the Teachers' Diploma of Association (A.G.S.M.) which, for the purposes of the Burnham Scale, entitles its holders to Qualified Teacher Status.

The Prospectus may be obtained, post free, from the Secretary, John Tooley, M.A.

ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC

Marylebone Road, London, N.W.1

Instituted 1822. Inc. by Royal Charter 1830.

Patrons: HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN,
HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH THE
QUEEN MOTHER.

President:

H.R.H. THE DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER

Principal: SIR REGINALD THATCHER,
M.A., D.Mus.(Oxon), Hon.R.A.M., F.R.C.M.

Warden:

MYERS FOGGIN, F.R.A.M., Hon.R.C.M.

Teachers Course in Speech and Drama

This is a full-time course of three years' duration for men and women, leading to the award of the R.A.M. Teachers' Diploma (Speech and Drama) which is accepted by the Ministry of Education for Qualified Teacher Status.

The curriculum includes: 2 private lessons weekly, and classes and lectures in Acting; Choral Speech; Dancing; Fencing; History of Costume; Drama, Poetry and the Theatre; Improvisation; Microphone Technique; Make-up; Mime; Phonetics; Play Production; Principles of Teaching, Psychology; Public Speaking; Remedial Speech; Stage-lighting; Story-telling; Verse-speaking; Voice-production; Written English. Arrangements are made for students to teach in schools, under supervision, during their third year.

L.R.A.M. Diploma

Examinations for the Diploma in Speech and Drama and Mime are held during the Easter, Summer and Christmas vacations. Provisional dates for next session, 10th - 18th September.

PROSPECTUSES, SYLLABUSES and information from L. GURNEY FARROTT,
Hon.F.R.A.M., (Secretary).



BRITISH DRAMA LEAGUE TRAINING DEPARTMENT EIGHTH FULL-TIME COURSE

for

INSTRUCTORS IN AMATEUR DRAMA
January 11th to March 19th, 1954

in

B.D.L. Practice Theatre, 9 Fitzroy Square,
London, W.1

WINTER WEEK-END COURSES

FOR PRODUCERS

October 17th and 18th
October 31st and November 1st, 1953

FOR ACTORS

November 14th and 15th
November 28th and 29th, 1953

FOR PLAYWRIGHTS

April 24th and 25th, 1954

in

B.D.L. Practice Theatre, 9 Fitzroy Square,
London, W.1

PROSPECTUSES NOW READY

All enquiries to: Training Department,
B.D.L., 9 Fitzroy Square, London, W.1.

WEBBER-DOUGLAS SCHOOL OF SINGING AND DRAMATIC ART LTD

Principal: W. JOHNSTONE-DOUGLAS

FULL DRAMATIC TRAINING

PRIVATE SINGING LESSONS

SPECIAL COACHING FOR
AUDITIONS, ETC.

SCHOLARSHIPS for MEN

DIPLOMA AT END OF TWO-YEAR
COURSE

For Prospectus apply Secretary

CLAREVILLE STREET, LONDON, S.W.7

(FREemantle 2958)

A NEW STAGE LIGHTING PUBLICATION



Send for your copy
NOW!

This pocket size book really tackles those fundamental problems which confront Producers and Electricians of all Drama Groups, etc.

It indicates what equipment to use, how to use it, and the art of COLOUR LIGHTING is dealt with very clearly and simply.

Every Drama Group should add this Booklet to its Library

PRICE 3/6 EACH, POST FREE

from the Publishers:

W. J. FURSE & CO., LIMITED

69 TRAFFIC STREET (Tel.: 88213—7 lines), NOTTINGHAM

LONDON 9 CARTERET STREET, WESTMINSTER, S.W.1.

20 MOUNT STREET, MANCHESTER

Ask also for Illustrated Catalogue of "FURSE" Stage Lighting Equipment

PUBLISHED BY THE BRITISH DRAMA LEAGUE, 9 FITZROY SQUARE, LONDON, W.1, and
PRINTED BY THOMAS KNIGHT & CO. LTD., THE CLOCK HOUSE PRESS,
HODDESDON, HERTS.

G

ry

HESTER

and